A
h
3

00068072

294.55204
Gos/Fou
68072

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

F.B.R.A.S.

BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

Royal Asiatic Society.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

FOUR LECTURES

DELIVERED IN SUBSTANCE

TO THE

BRAHMOS IN BOMBAY AND POONA,

In April and July 1875,

BY THE

REV. NEHEMIAH GOREH,
NATIVE MISSIONARY PRIEST.

68072
oe

Bombay:
PRINTED AT THE
EDUCATION SOCIETY'S PRESS, BYCULLA.
1875.

00068072

LECTURE I.

GENTLEMEN,—I know that the words which I wish to speak to you ought, properly, and in order to be interesting and impressive, to be addressed extempore. But I am sorry to say that I have not such a command of the English language, in which I prefer to deliver this address, nor over my own ideas and thoughts, as to enable me to deliver an extemporary address. I beg you therefore to pity this my infirmity, and excuse my reading to you what I have prepared to set before you on the present occasion.

I also wish to state at the outset for what sort of persons I have prepared this present discourse. There are many among our countrymen whose minds are so far enlightened by English education that they can no longer believe in the religion in which our forefathers believed. Nor can they accept Christianity as a religion revealed by God; yet they believe in God, in virtue and vice, in a future state, in the duty of worshipping, honouring, and loving God, in the efficacy of prayer. They wish to have a religion and have already framed one, which is called Brahmoism or Theism, and have adopted it. Now I presume that there are many such persons as I have described in the present assembly, and it is for such persons that I have especially prepared my present discourse; though I hope that by God's grace it may profit others also who do not profess to belong to the Theistic Society, yet believe more or less in the doctrines of natural religion.

Now my object in addressing you these words is to show you, if I can, by God's blessing, that you are bound in reason not to stop where you do, but to come on further and embrace Christianity as the true revelation of God.

You think you ought to have a religion for yourselves and for your children, and you have framed one, and you think you cannot do without it.

And indeed a man is not worthy of the name of man if he does not know his maker, preserver, and benefactor, that is God. If he does not admire, praise, thank, worship and pray to Him, and does not love, honour, fear, and obey him. If he does not love virtue and try to avoid vice; does not strive to be holy, humble, meek, and loving; does not believe in a future state of existence. For to know God and to do these things is the essential characteristic of man, without which he is not a man but a brute, whatever else he may possess—learning, wealth, power, or anything else. This, I presume, is your opinion also, and therefore you have adopted a religion, *i.e.* Theism, and worship God and offer Him prayers and praises, and try to regulate your conduct according to the rules of that religion. You greatly value this religion and think you cannot do without it. But do you not consider this, that you would never have known this religion which you now profess, that is, you would never have been able to frame this religion for yourselves, unless your minds had been enlightened by Christianity, directly or indirectly; that is, by becoming acquainted with its truths directly from the mouth of its professors, and from books written purposely to set forth the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, or from other books based upon the teaching of Christianity, and deriving from it all the religious or moral truths that are contained in them. And this fact appears to me, and has always appeared, to be a sufficient reason for your embracing Christianity.

But whether I can make you see this matter as I do see it I cannot tell; I will, however, trusting in God's blessing, try to do so.

I beg you then to take into your consideration not only the fact that it is the light of Christianity which has enabled you to acquire such enlightened views about God and other religious truths, but this also, that you *could never have acquired* such

views but for the light which you have received from Christianity.

In this consists the reason which proves that Christianity is not from man, but is the revelation of God, and then it is clear of course that it is your duty to obey God and accept what He has revealed. For the examination of all the religious and philosophical systems of all countries and of all ages proves that man is incapable by his own reason and efforts to acquire such enlightened views of God and other religious truths. It is sufficiently proved by the history of the whole world that man's understanding and intellect are so faulty and defective, in this respect, that whenever he tries to think about, or to teach, religious truths, he is sure to go astray, and to entertain and to enunciate most inconsistent, perverse, and foolish notions about them. It is only the religion which is revealed by God that can give to man pure and correct notions of those truths. I beg you to think carefully whether what I say is true or not. If it be true, then Christianity, which gives men the correct knowledge of God and of all his duties towards God, towards himself, and towards his fellow creatures, must have been revealed by God, and we must accept it, and cannot reject it without being disobedient to God's will.

I beg you to mark that I do not say that men do not know God at all, or that they know nothing at all about the great fundamental truths of religion without Christianity. O, no. In the religious books of our own forefathers there are many sublime descriptions of God. He is often called Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient. He is called Most Holy, Most Merciful पवित्राणां पवित्रं यो मंगलानांच मंगलं। दैवतं दैवतानां च भूतानां यो ऽ व्ययः पिता" says the Vishnu Sahasranàma.* Then there are many books

* "Who is Holy of all Holy (or the most Holy), is Good of all good (or most Good), and is the God of all gods. Who is the Everlasting Father of creatures." I feel inclined to think that of all the nations of the world who have not come in contact with the Jewish or Christian Scriptures, the Hindoos come nearest to the knowledge of God and other religious truths which Christianity imparts. I was told that of all the Greek philosophers, Plato was most enlightened with regard to those truths. I therefore read some of

among the Hindoos which contain beautiful precepts on morality, beginning from the Upanishads down to the poems and songs of our Sádhus, such as Tukàràm and others. Indeed no religion could be considered a religion if it did not inculcate some of these fundamental truths of religion, and a man would no longer remain a man at all if he were deprived of all knowledge of them. But I wish you to observe that while all these religious books of our forefathers contain these great truths, they inculcate, at the same time, thousand-fold erroneous notions about those very truths, so that in

---

his treatises (by means of translations) with the view of ascertaining how far he was enlightened on those subjects. The impression which I have derived from reading those treatises is that compared with the notions of Hindoos about those truths, the notions of Plato were very poor and vague, and in fact it struck me that God and religion did not occupy that prominent position in his speculations which they are entitled to, and which they do occupy in the systems of the Hindoos. But the fault of those systems is, as I repeatedly say in these lectures, that with right notions of God, &c., they contain thousand-fold erroneous and absurd notions too about them, so that no one, by being trained in those systems, can learn religion in its purity. For instance, the very sublime passage quoted from Vishnu Sahasranáma, is followed by another which shows what huge error was lying in the mind of the author under those sublime notions of God to which he gave utterance in the above quoted passage. The following passage is यतः सर्वाणि भूतानि भवंत्यादियुगागमे। यस्मिंश्च प्रलयं यांति पुनरेव युगक्षये "From Whom all the creatures spring up in the beginning of the world, and in Whom, at the destruction of it, they are absorbed." Now this sets forth the Pantheistic notion of God. It is clearly borrowed from the well known passage of the Upanishad: यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायंते यत्प्रयंत्यभिसंविशंति. "From Which all these creatures spring up, to Which they return, and into Which they enter." Pantheism has been the tenet of Hindoo religion from the beginning, for the Pantheistic notion of God is to be found in the oldest book of the Hindoos, the Rig Veda Sanhitá. As in the passage इंद्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः ससुपर्णो गरुत्मान्। एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदंत्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः। "They call Him *Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni* (fire), and the glorious, goodly feathered *Garutman*. It, being one, the Bràhmanas call manifoldly. They call *Agni* (fire), *Yama, Mátariśwan*." Now I call Pantheism a huge error, for it destroys all distinctions between good and bad, superior and inferior, creator and creature, and takes away all reality from those high sounding words, "Holy of all holy, Good of all good, the Everlast-

reality those truths become of no avail to us, but our minds are filled with errors only. How could I have known God or the mode of worshipping Him as I now know (thank God) through Christianity, when I was taught from my childhood that that God Whom Hindoo books also describe to be Almighty, Holy, Merciful, &c., was Vishnu, Shiva, Krishna, Rama, Vithoba, or Ganapati, whose character, you know, is utterly unworthy of God. God is represented in Hindoo books only in two ways, namely, as Nirguna Brahma and Saguna. As Saguna He is represented only in one of these forms, namely Vishnu, &c. as the object of worship and devotion, or Bhakti.

---

ing Father of creatures," and from other sublime descriptions of God. I say Pantheism is destructive of all true religion; but happily those who hold it do not allow it to do its whole destructive work, but do, by the promptings of natural instinct, hold many religious truths which are inconsistent with it.

But I must say that the Hindoos do entertain many right notions about the attributes of God and about the virtues to be cultivated by men, and Christian missionaries will be disappointed if they entertain the idea that by giving right information to the Hindoos of some of the attributes of God or of some Christian virtues, they will make them consider it a new discovery and thus convince them that Christianity is a divine revelation. It must not be supposed that even such a sublime portion of the Christian Scriptures as the Sermon on the Mount will bring to their knowledge ideas which were utterly unknown to them (scattered here and there), though it cannot fail to raise in them sentiments of admiration. No, what proves Hindooism to be a human, and Christianity to be a divinely revealed religion is, what I have already said and do repeatedly say in these lectures, that the former, while containing truths, mixes and surrounds those truths with manifold errors and absurdities, and so makes those truths to a very great extent useless; and the latter, and it alone in the whole world, teaches us religion in its purity and perfection.

I wish also to state that though there are right and exalted statements about God and other points of religion in Hindoo books, yet I cannot bring myself to believe, as many Christians do, that the Hindoos, *i.e.* the Hindoos of bygone ages, the authors of those books, had got this light from either Jewish or Christian Scriptures. The light which they possessed may be a remnant of that light which Almighty God first gave to man when he created him, or may have been acquired by them by the guidance of natural reason, enlightened by that "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—S. John i. 9.

As for the Nirguna Brahma, the only devotion to Him is the thinking अहंब्रह्मास्मि I am Brahma, तत्वमसि Thou art That. Now this is no worship of God at all, but rather, to suppose that I am Brahma or God, is the greatest of all errors. And when I received the Sacrament of Upanayana and was supposed to be regenerated, or made dwija, that is, twice-born, what was I taught as the chief devotion of a Brahmana? It was Gáyatrí, which is a prayer to Savita, that is, the Sun, and this I was to repeat morning and evening, as my chief devotion, a hundred and eight times, or at least ten times; and all the other Mahayajnas, and various homas which a Brahman is ordered to perform as his devotions, what are they but offerings to fire, wind, sun, and other imaginary deities? Now think, I pray you, of what use are those truths about God and His true attributes which are to be found in Hindoo books? Could I, I ask you again, as a Hindoo, have known and worshipped God as I now do by the teaching of Christianity?

The notions which Christianity imparts about the attributes of God are thoroughly correct and perfect, and to whatever degree you now entertain correct and sound notions about those attributes, you owe them to the light of Christianity. But be sure that though there is a great deal said in other religious books about Holiness, Justice, Mercy, and other attributes of God, the notions which the authors and readers of those books entertained about them were not at all like those which you now entertain, but were most dark, defective, and inconsistent. For instance, God is described in Hindoo books as most Holy. But see how very dark and erroneous must have been the notions of their authors about God's holiness, when in those very books they state that that very God becomes manifest in the form of Shiva and Vishnu and Krishna, to whom, in those very books, many immoral deeds are ascribed.

And one thing more will show you how utterly defective and perverted their notions were about God's holiness. At the end of the Rása Panchádhyáyi, in the tenth Skandha of the Shrimad Bhágavata, Parikshit is made to ask Shuka, "How could God, the author and preserver of the rules of virtue, commit the

wicked act of adultery? स कथं धर्मसेतूनाम् वक्ता कर्ताभिरक्षिता। प्रतीपमाचरेद्-ब्रह्मन् परदाराभिमर्शनम्? Now observe that in the answer of Shuka it is not denied that Krishna did commit sinful acts, but on the contrary it is confessed that mighty ones often *do violate* the law of virtue and do rash things. धर्मव्यतिक्रमोदृष्ट: ईश्वराणां च साहसम्. But the answer is that sinful acts do not defile the mighty Beings; as if to commit sin was not in itself the defilement, but that a mighty one may commit sin and yet remain holy!* Now this is an utter perversion of truth.

---

* It is extremely difficult to describe to those who have not been born and brought up as Hindoos, the exact state of the mind of the Hindoos regarding the nature of God, as well as other subjects of religion. It must not be concluded from what is stated here that the Hindoos ever entertain the idea that God is an immoral or unholy, or an unjust Being. No: that God is holy, just, and good is the conviction of their inmost heart. Yet it is also true that they do ascribe actions which are unholy and unjust to those whom they hold to be manifestations or incarnations of God. And the inconsistency of such a belief is not altogether unperceived by them, as the feeling of it sometimes gives expression to itself as it has done in the question put into the mouth of Parikshit, by the author of Bhágavatee, and they try to remove it in some way. All this shows very clearly that their notions of the holiness, justice, and goodness of God, &c., were after all very vague and imperfect.

Even their Pantheistic theory that our souls are one with God,—one in substance,—does not lead them to give up the belief that God in His essence is ever pure, though it is really a contradiction to believe that we, who are sinful, are one substance with God, and yet God is pure. But into whatever contradictions such a theory may lead them, they have not lost that inmost witness of the soul that God is good. The great systematizer of Pantheism, that is, Adwaitamata, Sankarácharya, often repeats his favourite phrase in describing God, or Brahma, that He, or It, is नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभाव, "By nature ever pure, ever wise, ever free [from ignorance, sin, and misery]."

And to show that this doctrine about the nature of God is not contradicted by the belief that human souls are one in substance with God, they contrive most extraordinary ways. I have stated them in my "Refutation of the Hindoo Philosophical Systems." But it is clear again that had not the notions of our forefathers about God's nature been, after all, very imperfect and superficial, they could never have been able to entertain the Pantheistic idea that our souls are one in substance with God. Just as men of the present generation who have got better light than our forefathers regarding

Why do we admire and love a person? Because he is possessed of good qualities, that is, he is truthful, just, and so forth. But if one said that he tells lies and yet remains truthful, and does acts of injustice and yet remains just, I would say whatever he may technically be called in the language of a strange system of morality, he cannot be the object either of admiration or love. In fact such a thing is absurd, it is enunciating contradictions. So we think Almighty God worthy of the highest admiration and love, because He is most holy and just, &c., that is, it is impossible for Him to commit acts of unholiness or injustice, but not because though He commits such acts he yet remains holy and just. But the truth is, as I said, that man's understanding has become very defective and liable to go astray about religious truths, however clever he may be about other things, and therefore it is impossible for him to save himself from such errors whenever he would attempt to think about them and to teach them.

Now I will give you another instance from the Upanishads. For many of our reformed brethren in these days think that though there are very corrupt statements of religious truths in the later books of the Hindoos, yet the Upanishads teach us the pure knowledge of God. But this is a great mistake. In the Chhándogya Upanishad, a number of most curious modes of Upásanás, or devotions, are prescribed; one of these is so obscene that one cannot venture to describe it in a public assembly like this. Those Upásanás are, moreover, joined with certain vratas, or vows, to be observed by those who practise them, and so this Upásaná has also a vrata enjoined to those who would practise it. And what do you think is that vrata or a vow? It is that he who is practising this Upásaná ought not to refuse any woman that would come to him! न कांचन परिहरेत्। And the great commentator Sankaráchárya, and Anandagiri his scholiast, com-

religious truths by coming in contact with Christianity, and are setting up new religions by the help of that light just to satisfy the natural craving of mind after a religion, have thrown away that Pantheistic idea which has been the fundamental article of the religion of our forefathers from time immemorial, as I have shown in the last note.

menting on this passage, say, that this act cannot be sinful but a duty, since the Veda orders it. How defective and dark must be the notions of the authors of the Upanishads, and of our most learned philosophers, like Sankarácháryа and Anandagiri, about the holiness of God and about morality! While I speak of philosophers of our country, let me bring to your notice what Viśwanàthapanchánana, the learned author of Muktávali, a book on Nyáya philosophy, says of God in the very Mangalácharana* of his book, नूतनजलधररुचये गोपवधूटीदुकूलचोराय । तस्मै कृष्णाय नमः संसारमहीरुहस्य बीजाय । "Salutation to that Krishna, whose appearance is like a new cloud, the stealer of the cloths of the Gopis, who is the seed of the tree of the universe." It is said that the Greek philosophers did not believe in the gods and their stories in which ignorant people of their country believed. I do not think this is true, and certainly such was not the case with the philosophers of our country. The great Sankarácháryа, and all other most learned philosophers of this country, as fully believed in all the stories of the Puránas about the gods and of their incarnations, as the ignorant do, as is clear from their writings. In the introduction of his commentary on the Bhagavadgítá, Śankarácháryа states, in accordance with the orthodox faith of the Hindoos, that God who created the universe, to preserve the Brahmanas became incarnate from Vasudeva and Devaki, मौमस्य ब्रह्मणो ब्राह्मणत्वस्य रक्षणार्थं देवक्यां वसुदेवादिकल संबभूव ।

Now I will give you another instance from the Vedas to show how very defective man's views are about the holiness of God and about morality. There is a ceremony mentioned in the Shadvinsa Bráhmana of the Sáma Veda, in which the god Indra is to be invoked by the title' अहल्यायै जार, O adulterous lover of Ahallyá! as by an endearing appellation. Now that the Veda should prescribe a ceremony in which a god who is believed to be an adulterer is to be worshipped is itself very wrong. But what is still more lamentable

* A prayer to God mostly in metre, placed in the beginning of a book with the view of obtaining a blessing on the enterprise, and security from all impediments [विघ्न] in the way of its accomplishment.

is the fact that his adultery, instead of being reprehended, is considered a matter of glory and praise. What a contrast the Holy Bible presents with these books. It mentions failings in the lives of some eminent servants of God. And it is no matter of wonder that they should have failings. But does the Bible ever set them forth as things to be gloried in, or does it say that sins do not defile God's saints? No, but on the contrary, when they are of a very gross nature, it openly condemns them. David for instance is called by God as the man after His own heart. And he well deserved to be called so, for he was undoubtedly possessed with many excellent qualities, and his love and devotion to God were of a very exalted kind. But when he committed a gross sin, God sent to him a prophet to rebuke him, who after convincing David of the heinousness of his sin by means of a parable, conveys to him this sentence of the Lord, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in His sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword and taken his wife to be thy wife. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised Me and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house," and so forth. Thus to show that God abhors sin, though they who commit it be his beloved ones, He made David to suffer much in this life, as his subsequent history shows, though on account of his true repentance he forgave him and saved his soul. And how bitterly David was grieved at his sin and how deep his repentance was, will be seen by reading the 51st Psalm, which he composed on that occasion. So great a difference, you see, there is between the Holy Bible and all other religious books.

What a great mistake, then, those make who think that though the later books of the Hindoos do not teach pure Theism yet the Vedas do. The Sanhitás and the Bráhmanas of the Veda are filled with prayers and praises of, or with the ritual of sacrificing to, the sun and wind and fire, and Indra, Varuṇa and other imaginary beings. And though in the

Upanishads there are some sublime descriptions of the attributes of God, yet there is much more in them which is erroneous and absurd. The great Upanishad Brihadáranyaka begins with the instruction on the Upásaná or devotion to the sacrificial horse. The Chhándogya is filled with most curious Upásanás of all sorts of objects, and one of them is even very obscene, as I have already stated. But again the notion of God in the Upanishads is pantheistic. बहुस्यां प्रजायेय The supreme Spirit said in the beginning of the creation, "Let me be many and be produced;" सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म, "All this is Brahma;" अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, "I am Brahma;" तत्त्वमसि, "Thou art That." Such is the doctrine of the Upanishads. This spoils everything. Surely you do not call it Theism. Of what use, then, are those apparently sublime descriptions about the attributes of God? When they teach that that God Himself becomes this universe, and that you, and I, sinful, ignorant, miserable creatures, are ourselves that great God, they teach the greatest absurdity.

Please to remember, gentlemen, what I said before. I said that I do not deny that even the religions which are invented by men do contain the great and fundamental truths of religion. Take care that you do not fall into those errors, in this respect, into which learned men, born and brought up in Christian countries, do fall. They are apt to imagine, it seems to me, that false religions can contain nothing but errors from beginning to end, and that no statements about one God or His true attributes, no inculcation of moral duties, &c., can be found in them. But again, on the other hand, if they happen to see in books written by heathen authors, excellent passages about one God, and some sublime descriptions of moral duties, &c., they are apt to fall into an opposite error, and to think that those authors must have possessed as correct a knowledge of religious and moral truths as that which Christianity imparts. And they are so far blinded by this latter error that if they happen to find in other parts of those writings of the heathen authors erroneous and unworthy statements about God and moral duties, they try to explain them away. For instance, it is plainly stated of Socrates, the wisest

and best of the Greek philosophers, that when he was about to die, the last thing he said was an injunction to his friend Crito, to offer a cock to the heathen god Æsculapius. Now Bishop Blomfield, in his article on Socrates, attributes this act of his to the delirious effects of the poison which he drank. But there is not the slightest reason for such a speculation. And besides, there are many passages in the dialogues of Plato from which it is clear that Socrates believed in and offered prayers to the various heathen gods, when he was in his most sober senses. Here is one of his prayers which he offered to those gods when he was quite sober—"O beloved Pan, and all ye other gods of this place, grant me to become beautiful in the inner man, and that whatever outward things I have may be at peace with those within. May I deem the wise man rich, and may I have such a portion of gold as none but a prudent man can either bear or employ." This prayer occurs in the end of the dialogue called Phaedrus. What reason, then, is there to suppose that Socrates could not have asked to offer a cock to Æsculapius in his sober senses? But the reason why Bishop Blomfield has put forth such a groundless speculation was, I think, this—he being brought up in the light of Christianity, his mind was incapable of conceiving that Socrates, who sometimes speaks about one God and about some moral duties like an enlightened man, could think of offering a cock to a false god. But we know that such a thing is possible, for our own philosophers and learned men did the same thing. They also believed in one God and propounded elaborate arguments to prove the existence of one God, omnipotent, omniscient, and yet believed in and worshipped many gods also. Nay, we ourselves also did it before our minds were enlightened by the light of Christianity. But when I say "we" I fear I cannot include in that word most of the persons present here. I suppose they have been put in English schools from their youth and have begun to imbibe English ideas, that is, Christian ideas, from that time. Young men breathe quite a different atmosphere in English schools, so much so, that no sooner does a man enter an English school

than he begins to be quite a different man, and begins to be gradually anglicised in his ideas. My case was however quite different. I was brought up in thorough orthodox and old fashioned Hindoo notions. I did not know anything of English in the early part of my life, nor did I associate with those who knew it. I therefore, and those who are like me can understand how *apparently* correct notions about very high doctrines of religion can co-exist with most perverse and erroneous notions about them. I say *apparently* correct notions, for should they be *really* correct and *thoroughly* sound, they would not co-exist with error. And because Christianity does impart *truly* correct and sound notions about religious truths, men who have been brought up in the light of Christianity, cannot conceive how any one could enunciate, at one time, such notions about God and other religious truths as appear quite correct and sound, and at another time the grossest absurdities and follies. And hence when they find in some parts of the writings of non-Christian authors apparently correct and sound statements about one God and other religious truths, they make two mistakes;—first, they ascribe to them the same enlightenment which they themselves possess from Christianity, and suppose that those non-Christian authors understood those truths in the same correct sense in which Christianity teaches; and secondly, when in other parts of those writings they find erroneous statements, they try to explain them away. So has Bishop Blomfield done with regard to the teaching of Socrates. By the same mistake Paley was led to make this groundless statement in a note in his Evidences of Christianity, that learned Brahmans did not believe in the idolatry of their country, though they persuaded the ignorant people to believe in it. And why did he think so? Because to his mind it was inconceivable that men of education could believe in the popular superstition. But he did not take into consideration the fact that the learning of heathen philosophies never gives that light to men which Christianity gives.

By the same mistake Dr. Colenso has also selected some fine sayings of Nának about God and other religious truths,

and quoted them in his book, and thus being himself deceived, has led others to the false belief that Nának's writings may as truly be said to be divinely inspired as the Holy Bible. But the truth is that Nának was in no sense more enlightened than the authors of the Bhágavata, Bhagavadgita, and other Hindoo books. Whatever good things may be found in Nának's writings or teachings, may be found in these also; and whatever errors and absurdities are to be found in these, may be found in Nának's teaching too. Nának believed and taught the अद्वैत मत of the Vedanta, that is, Pantheism. I have got in my possession passages which I took down from men who were well versed in his religion, which prove this. And you will agree with me, I suppose, that he who holds Pantheistic views of God is in the grossest darkness about the nature of God. It appears also from other passages which I took down from the religious books of the Nánakpanthis, that he and his successors believed in the incarnations of Vishnu, in the various doctrines of the Sánkhya and Vedánta philosophies, and other articles of the Hindoo systems. How absurd then it is to call him a reformer, or to think him to be more enlightened than other teachers among the Hindoos, as many Europeans do. If he did not teach image worship to His followers, that is nothing very remarkable. You must know that even among the orthodox Hindoos worshipping God in an image is considered rather a low stage of religion, and as chiefly fitted for men who are not capable of the higher modes of worship, that is मानसपूजा or mental worship. Nay, it is even plainly condemned, in passages like the following मृच्छिलाधातुदार्वादिमूर्त्तौ ईश्वरबुद्धयः । क्लिश्यंति तपसा मूढाः परां शांतिं न यांति ते। And as these modern founders of sects, like Nának, Kabir, Prán̤anáth, and others, professed to teach a higher form of devotion, it is no wonder that they chose mental devotion in preference to image worship, which, as I said, was no new idea but a doctrine of orthodox Hindooism. But moreover, perhaps the influence of Mahomme-

* Those who believe the image of clay, or a stone, or a metal, or wood, to be God, are tormented by a fruitless penance; ignorant fellows, they do not attain to the supreme felicity.

danism was the cause of their rejecting image worship. And if you will read the Kurán, you will see plainly that whatever true light Mahommedanism contains, it has received from Christianity.

I beg you therefore to guard yourselves against those mistakes into which European Christians are apt to fall. They are even unable to see the superiority of Christianity over human systems of religion and philosophy as clearly as those can who had been first brought up in pure heathen darkness and afterwards were made acquainted with Christianity. For when they who are brought up in the light of Christianity find apparently good and exalted statements of religious truths in the writings of non-Christian authors, they think that those authors understood and set forth those truths in the same pure and correct sense in which they are revealed by Christianity, and so they cannot but think that the difference in their teaching and that of Christianity is very little, if any at all. And I am sure that most of those of our own countrymen who have been educated in English schools from their youth do not escape these mistakes.

What therefore I wish you to observe is this. Many of the great and fundamental truths of religion may be found, and are found in books written by non-Christian authors. But it is clear that their authors did not possess true, correct, and consistent notions about those very truths, because they also teach many erroneous and absurd things which are quite contrary to those truths. As I showed before, for example, that Hindoo books often say that God is holy, and yet those very books say that that very God became incarnate and did unholy acts. Hence it is clear that though the authors of those books teach that great doctrine of religion in words, namely, the holiness of God, yet they had no true notion of it.

I will give you a few more examples about other truths of religion. It is a truth that we ought to obey God's commands. But it is also a truth that God will never command a sinful act. But in this matter men have fallen into great mis-

takes. They think that God can command even a sinful act, and when he commands it, it becomes a duty to do it. As for instance, the author of the Chándogya Upanishad and his commentators Śankarácharya and Anandagiri taught that sometimes fornication and adultery become duties because the Sâstra has enjoined it. So again in a Vedic ceremony called महाव्रत, and at a certain season of the year, viz. Holi, using abusive and obscene language is said to be a duty, because the Sâstra, that is, God, has enjoined it, and therefore it is not only not sinful, but is even a duty. Is it not a perversion of truth?

Again, it is a truth that we ought to call upon God. But see how men have perverted this truth. They say that if any one would utter the name of God even with a wicked heart, his sins are purged away हरिर्हरति पापानि दुष्टचित्तैरपि स्मृतः। And it is not a mere poetical exaggeration, for facts are stated to prove the truth of this doctrine, such as the story of Ajāmila, Válmiki, &c.

Again, it is a truth that men ought to honour their parents. But see how this truth is exaggerated and perverted, for it is said that father and mother and teachers ought to be honoured even more than God. It is said of Pundarika that while he was serving his parents, though God Himself came and stood near him, he quite disregarded Him and took no notice of Him, and this act of Pundarika is supposed to have been most meritorious and praiseworthy.

Now in showing to you that man's-understanding and intellect have become very blind and corrupt with regard to divine and religious truths, I have brought some proofs from the religious books of the Hindoos only, but you may safely take them as examples to prove that such has been the case with man in every other part of the world also. Still however, since besides our own forefathers, the ancient Greeks and Romans were noted for learning and civilization, I will tell you briefly in what gross errors they too were lying with regard to divine and religious truths.

I have already mentioned that the last act of Socrates, the wisest and best of Greek philosophers, at the most solemn time of death, was a request to his friend Crito, to offer a cock to Æsculapius. This was not Theism surely. In the book called "The Republic of Plato," which is supposed to be the best production of the best age of Greek intellect, and in which also Socrates is represented as the teacher, there is abundant proof to show that Plato and Socrates believed in the gods of their country, and that in their view religion consisted in worshipping them. But this is not all. In that very book immoral and licentious practices are prescribed by Socrates to the guardians of his republic.

In another dialogue of Plato called "Phædrus," Socrates speaks of the act of unnatural lust as only a coarser and less philosophic mode of living, and says about the parties who have perpetrated the act, that they also, being subject to the madness of love, are to be reckoned among those who have "set out in the heavenward path," and that "they should never again enter on darkness and the paths beneath the earth, but that passing a splendid life they should be happy walking with each other," and so forth!! See into what miserable darkness even the greatest intellects are apt to wander away without the light of revelation! Now you will readily acknowledge that those whose notions of morality are so corrupt, cannot have a right knowledge of God and His holiness, and so you will not call such men Theists.

In his dialogue called "Timæus," Plato says, "All that is termed the intemperance in pleasure is unjustly charged upon those who do wrong, for no man is voluntarily bad, but the bad become bad by reason of ill disposition of the body and bad education." And so, as Prof. Jowett says in his introduction to Timæus, "Plato hardly leaves any place for the freedom of the will." According to him "the lusts of men are caused by their bodily constitution." Now you will acknowledge that these notions are subversive of all religion. And please to remember that Socrates and Plato are considered as the most enlightened of all Greek philosophers. And as far as I have

read, there appeared to me very little of true Theism in their teaching or of our duty towards God, though there is a great deal of worshipping gods.

What they say accidentally as it were of God and of His making the world, is not better than what may be found in Hindoo books; nay, I am inclined to think that it is not even so good.

Of the philosophers of Greece and Rome in general hear what Canon Liddon says:

"The most intellectual of the Greeks, whose thoughts about God and the soul might at times almost seem to anticipate Christianity, as they have been welcomed with the respect of many a generation of Christians, has unwittingly warned us of the religious importance of mere culture, by staining his pages, not once or twice, but habitually, with sympathetic references to crimes, tolerable enough to the public sentiment of Athens, but the very names of which are defiling to Christian lips."

Again, "In Greece and Rome, suicide was a precept not of religion but of philosophy. It was recommended by philosophies the most opposed to each other. In Greece the great representatives of the cynic school, Zeno, Diogenes, and in Christian times Peregrinus, died by their own hands. At Rome Lucratius, the Epicurean poet, as well as Cato and Brutus, under Stoic influences, destroyed themselves. The Epicurean feeling, that when life had been made the most of for the purpose of enjoyment it was time to end it, coincided as to its practical result with the Stoic doctrine that the stern effort by which man could in extremity make good his self-mastery is a voluntary death. Of this doctrine Seneca is the great master. Suicide is, he contended, the act by which man asserts his rights over himself, when face to face with the menaces and oppressions of tyranny. Suicide is the door through which liberty may retire from a world of slaves."

As to what Canon Liddon says about the "thoughts" of Greek philosophers "about God and the soul" as "at times almost anticipating Christianity," that need not surprise us. I think that if Canon Liddon saw some passages about God

in the Upanishads and other Hindoo books, he would perhaps say the same thing about them.

Now from all the foregoing observations the conclusion which I wish to draw is this—I say that even without the assistance of the light of Christianity men have possessed, and do possess, a certain kind of knowledge of many truths of religion, yet it is not a correct and consistent knowledge of them, but it is very corrupt, confused, and full of errors.

It is a fact thoroughly proved by examining the history, not of this country only, but of all other countries also, that however clever men may be in other matters, in mathematics, logic, poetry or any other science or art, yet sin has so corrupted and blinded the understanding of men in the things of God and true religion, that they can never, never form correct and consistent notions about them, but will *certainly* go astray, and fall into all sorts of errors.

When, however, Christianity comes, and men come in contact with it and their minds are enlightened by it, they begin to think that it is not difficult to know the true religion. We can easily find it out, they say, by our reason and intuition. But if you will judge in this matter by the light of facts and not follow mere fancy, you will be convinced that it is a great mistake to think so.

I hear men say in these days repeatedly that they can find the whole of true religion in Hindoo religious books, all that they have to do is to collect what is true and reject what is erroneous. But I say that no one can do it unless he has come in contact with Christianity and has received much light from it either directly or indirectly. Were not those men as wise and clever who wrote those religious books? Why could they not discriminate between truth and error, as young men in these days pretend that they could without the light of Christianity? Were not those hundred of Sastris who lived and died within my memory as clever and wise? Why could they not make such discrimination, but believed *all equally*? Here again I would say to such young men that they cannot judge in this matter so well as a man like myself. For they have been

familiar with English ideas from their youth, and they cannot know the state of the minds of those who have been brought up altogether out of the influence of those ideas as I was. They think, for instance, that they can easily pick out those passages from the Bhagavata in which worthy descriptions of God are given, and can throw away all those portions in which Krishna is set forth as God, and those which contain the description of his immoral acts. And had I been brought up under the same circumstances under which they have been, I should have been apt to think so too. But I was not so brought up, and I assure you that in the whole of Bhagavata, Rásapanchádyáyi was my most favourite portion, in which Krishna's licentious sports are described, and that not on account of my being fond of licentious poetry; O no, but on account of my *bhakti*, or devotion, and it was from a purely devotional motive that I made it a custom for some time to read it every day. And I assure you that not one of the great sastris and learned men of Kasi differed from me in their estimation of it. This assertion of mine would be a great puzzle to English Christians, and I am not sure that it is not so to those native gentlemen also who have been anglicised in their notions from their youth. I assert, however, simple facts.

Judging, then, from all the religious and philosophical systems and books, not only of our country, but of all the countries in the world; judging from the state of my own mind and judgment before I was enlightened by Christianity; and judging from the state of minds, understandings and judgment of all the sastris and pundits who have never come at all under the influence of Christianity; judging from these (but not from the state of your mind) it seems certain that men can never find out pure religion without revelation, and that though they do possess a certain kind of knowledge of divine and religious truths, yet there is some such weakness and some such defect in men's understanding and judgment with regard to those truths, that whenever they would try to think about them or teach them, they are sure to go astray and fall into all sorts of errors.

Therefore, gentlemen, I beg to tell you this, as my firm con-

viction, that the light which you now possess and the religion which you have now adopted you owe entirely to Christianity, and not only do you owe them to Christianity, but if you will consider the subject carefully and impartially, you will see clearly that you *could never have got this light and this religion in any other way.*

No unprejudiced man could believe for a moment that this Brahmism or Theism which you now profess, but which has never been known in this pure form unmixed with many errors, absurdities, and impurities, to any set of men, learned or unlearned, in any country or in any age, excepting only where the light of Christianity has reached, whether in Europe, America, Calcutta, or Bombay; no unprejudiced man, I say, could believe for a moment that you have discovered this Theism by your own reason or intuition, and that you have not, however unconsciously, got it from Christianity. Nor can any reasonable man believe that you *could* have got it in any other way except from Christianity, nor could he believe that Christianity is a production of the human mind and intellect, which gives what the human mind and intellect never have been able to find out, and which it is impossible in the nature of things that it should find out. If then Christianity is not a production of the human mind, then it is a revelation of Almighty God, and if so, it is your duty not to stop where you now do, but to believe and accept the revelation which God in His great mercy has sent to us all.

A Brahmo gentleman, however, before whom I once had an opportunity of propounding this argument, tried to evade this conclusion by the following consideration. He said, "though we have learned a great deal from Christianity and have derived much benefit from it, still we do not think that we are wholly indebted to Christianity, or that we have learned, what we now know, from Christianity alone, inasmuch as Christianity itself is indebted to other systems which preceded it for the light which it gives." Therefore, he argued, "were it even true that we have derived all our knowledge directly from Christianity, still we cannot be said to be entirely indebted to Christianity,

nor can Christianity be said to be the original source of that light which it imparts to others.". His opinion was that God has been carrying on from the beginning the religious education of the world, through various gifted men whom He raised up by His Providence from time to time, such as Socrates, Plato, Mahomet, Nának, and others, (among whom he would reckon, of course, the holy prophets and our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ too,) and these have severally been acting their part, and helping forward the progress of religious knowledge, till at last it has arrived at that perfect stage which Brahmoism now represents. Just in the same way, in his opinion, Christianity also has only acted its part in this great work of the religious education of the world, and nothing more. Thus this gentleman wanted to make it appear, that there is nothing extraordinary in Christianity, but that it is only like the many other religious systems that have made their appearance in the world, and which have all been the products of man's natural intellect and reason. But this I consider to be altogether a misrepresentation or a misconception of facts. Is it true that the world has gone on improving in matters of religious belief? Is it true that as these imaginary prophets, namely, Socrates, Plato, Manu, Kapila, Buddha, &c., arose one after another, each improved upon what his predecessor had taught, so that they might all be said to have gone on building up this mighty structure of religion, till nothing was left for Christianity, or Brahmoism, but just to add the topstone? If this was all that Christianity has done, then no one could claim for it a supernatural origin, merely on the ground of the excellence of its teaching. But this is not the case. Lay aside the Bible and those systems which are derived from the Bible, and there is no progress towards purity and perfection in religion anywhere to be found in the world. Is there any philosophic or religious system, or any progressive series of systems, of which you can say that it approaches in purity and perfection so near to Christianity, that Christianity might be said to have done nothing more than to have only given a finishing stroke to it? Not at all. I have shown you already how people, by picking out some fine por-

tions from the writings of some authors, as Colenso from Nanak's, mislead themselves and others, and imagine that they come very near to Christian enlightenment, and how a little consideration shows all such ideas to be a delusion. The fact is, there are fine sentiments to be found in all these religions; and there are absurdities, follies and impurities likewise to be found in them all. Nay, when we examine them each carefully, and try to find out what were the true views of those who have enunciated such fine notions on those very subjects, by comparing one part of their writings with another, we soon discover that their own ideas about those very sublime truths which they seem to enunciate are very defective; and, as I said, we should guard ourselves against the error of supposing that they held those truths in the same correct, consistent, definite, and perfect sense in which we, who are enlightened by Christianity, do hold them. If there are fine sentiments to be found in Tukaram, Nának, Socrates, or Plato, so there are equally fine, nay, it may be, finer ones, to be found in the Bhágavata, Gitá, Upanishads and other books; and if there are follies and absurdities in these, there are likewise in those,—so that what I wish to show is that there is no progress. No one of these religions of man's invention can be said to have come nearer to Christianity than another. They all bear one common characteristic, and Christianity bears quite another, so that while they enable us to see what man's natural reason can achieve, and how far it can go in discovering true religion, Christianity is proved to be a system which human reason is unable of itself to discover.

I know, however, that you think that there are some objectionable points in the teaching of Christianity also, and this thought must prevent you from coming to the same conclusion with me. I am sure, however, that a careful consideration of those points will remove all objections about them. I should be very glad to say something about those points at another time, if it shall please God to give me opportunities. In the meantime I beg to advise you to pray God for His light.

LECTURE II.

I TRIED to show you, gentlemen, in my first discourse, that without revelation men can never find out pure religion, and that though they do possess a certain kind of knowledge of divine and religious truths, yet there is some such weakness and some such defect in men's understanding and judgment with regard to those truths, that whenever they attempt to think about them or to teach them, they are sure to go astray and fall into all sorts of errors; and that Christianity alone does teach men pure religion, and therefore it is proved to be the revelation of God.

At the end of that discourse, however, I said that you do not quite agree with me that Christianity teaches us altogether a pure and perfect religion, for you think that there are some objectionable points in its teaching also. And so you would necessarily disagree with me in my conclusion that Christianity is a revelation of God.

But I also said that I was sure that a careful consideration of those points would remove all objections about them, and I expressed a desire of saying something about those points if God would enable me to do so. Well, to-day I wish to make a beginning of it. Now I know that among such things in our Scriptures as appear to you very objectionable are those passages in the Old Testament which ascribe to God such acts as, for instance, commanding the Israelites to extirpate the Canaanites, and not only this, but, in some cases, to kill men, women, children, and animals, without discrimination. I have in my possession a letter written to me by a very vehement Brahmo, attacking the Bible and finding much fault with it on account of such statements in it, and using very harsh and violent language towards it. You will perhaps say "very deservedly." Well, we shall presently see, for I purpose in the present

discourse, and perhaps in a following one, to consider your objection to such statements in the Bible.

And I wish to tell you one thing here, and beg you to keep it always in your minds. It is this; that one very easy way of answering many of your objections to the statements of the Bible is to point out to you facts in nature, which you say is your Bible. For it is very easy to show you that if you raise objections to such and such statements or such and such doctrines of the Bible, the very same objections may be raised to the works of God in nature also. If therefore those objections are to prove that the Bible cannot be the Word of God, the same objections would also prove that the God of nature cannot be a just, holy, merciful, and good God.

And I wish you to observe this also. You know that many objections, based upon certain facts in nature, are raised by atheists and sceptics against the doctrines of natural religion, or Theism. And yet they do not prevent you from believing in Theism. Your common sense leads you to believe so firmly in the truths of Theism, namely, the existence of God, His goodness, holiness, justice, and so forth, that though atheists and sceptics bring very formidable objections, based upon certain facts in nature, they appear to you of no force, but you easily persuade yourselves that since man is but a little worm of this earth, and since the wisdom and counsel of Him who has made this universe are so very far beyond the utmost stretch of man's conception, it must be owing to his own ignorance that certain facts in His creation appear to him to be contrary to wisdom, goodness, and justice, but that they cannot be so in reality. You feel at once that you are not competent to say that there may not be deep reasons fully to justify all the ways of God, and you feel no difficulty in believing that you may be ignorant of those reasons. Now precisely in the same way common sense has led us also to believe, from many internal and external proofs, that the Bible is the revealed word of God, and we therefore do not see any force in those objections which you bring against the statements and doctrines of the Bible.

But, to make plain what I have briefly stated, take those

places in the Bible which appear to you very objectionable, namely, those mentioned above, where God is said to have commanded the Israelites to extirpate the Canaanites. But before applying my remarks to your objections, I will say this in the first place, that many persons are perhaps labouring under a great mistake with regard to this command of God. I think they imagine that God is represented in this matter as a despot who by a capricious will to confer favour upon His favourite ones, namely, the Israelites, commands them, without any regard to justice, to attack lawful possessors of a country, and to destroy them in order to take possession of it. But the Bible says distinctly that it was in order to punish the Canaanites for their own great sins that the Israelites were commanded to go and extirpate them. Listen to what Moses says to the Israelites in the 9th chapter of Deuteronomy, "Speak not thou in thy heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land, *but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee.* Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness, for thou art a stiffnecked people; from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until ye came unto this place ye have been rebellious against the Lord," and so forth. Do you see any trace of favouritism or partiality here? Is not this very plain speaking, such as becomes a book of God? There are other places in the Pentateuch where it is shown to what degree of abomination the wickedness of the Canaanites had reached, and that it was for such wickedness that they were punished by God through the instrumentality of the Israelites, and I think you believe that God may use any person or any nation or any thing to accomplish His own purposes. In the 18th chapter of Leviticus we thus read, "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech. Thou

shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: and the land is defiled: *Therefore* I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants."

Sodom and Gomorrah were cities of the same country, which had been destroyed by God some four hundred years before the conquest of Canaan, by sending fire on them on account of their great sins. What sort of sins were these? Listen to the description of them which the Bible gives. "There came two angels to Sodom at even," we read in the 19th chapter of Genesis. No doubt they came in the form of men. "And Lot sat in the gate of Sodom. And Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter; And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse

with thee than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door. But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door. And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door."

Such was the depth of wickedness and abomination into which the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah had sunk. And therefore, says the Bible, "The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven. And He overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground."

I do not know whether you will acknowledge or not that such wickedness deserved such a punishment, remembering at the same time that God does not punish men even for great wickedness at once, but after showing patience and forbearance for a long time, and when no hope of amendment is left, and when perhaps sparing such men is calculated to do very great harm to the whole human race at large, I think many persons will acknowledge that such wickedness did deserve such punishment, but I know that there are also persons who would think it too severe and indiscriminate. Now I will say to those who thus think, that I have not given an answer yet to your objections based upon the supposed severity and apparent indiscriminateness of such punishment. That answer I wish to give you presently.

I only read to you the narrative about the men of Sodom and Gomorrah to show you into what depth of wickedness those men had sunk whom God is said to have destroyed by fire. These two cities belonged to the same country, namely, Canaan. But it seems that the other inhabitants of Canaan, though very wicked, yet had not then filled up the measure of their iniquity in the same way as the men of Sodom and Gomorrah had done, and therefore God was still showing to them His long-suffering and forbearance. This is plain from God's own words to Abraham, for God thus says to Abraham in the 15th chapter of Genesis, "In the fourth generation they, that is, the Israelites,

shall come hither, that is, into the land of Canaan, again, *for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.*" By four generations here is meant four hundred years. For in the thirteenth verse it is said, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years." Now how clear it becomes from this place that it was not without showing to them patience and forbearance for many *centuries* that God at last punished the Canaanites by the sword of the Israelites as he had before punished the men of Sodom and Gomorrah by fire.

Now had these words of God to Abraham not been recorded in the Bible, we should not have known the fact that God did bear for a *very long* time with the inhabitants of Canaan before He punished them so severely. Let us learn therefore not to judge rashly about the acts of God recorded in Holy Scripture, but rather say that had we been informed of all the circumstances connected with them, we should have had more light thrown upon the subject to see the justice and goodness of God in them.

By all these passages of the Bible which I have now quoted (and there are more like these), I wish to impress upon your minds that it was not out of favouritism, or partiality to the Israelites, that God commanded them to extirpate the Canaanites, but in order to punish the latter for their own most horrible sins and abominations, and that also after showing them patience and long-suffering for many centuries. It is true that God accomplishes many purposes by one means. It was also the purpose of God to establish the Israelites in a separate country and to train them up in the principles of true religion, that among them Christ the enlightener of the whole human race might at last appear. But this arrangement was not for their sakes only, but for the sakes of us all. For what did God say to Abraham when He promised him to give the land of Canaan to his seed? He said to him these remarkable words, signifying what was the ultimate end of that whole arrangement, "*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*" But whatever other purposes God had in

view in giving the land of Canaan to the seed of Abraham, it was the horrible wickedness of the Canaanites themselves for which they were commanded to be extirpated.

Now you will acknowledge, I presume, that God has a perfect right to punish sinners, especially when after many warnings, and after much patience shown to them for a long time, they continue and even go on increasing in their wickedness, and become the cause of spreading corruption through the whole human race. You will also acknowledge, I suppose, that as the Almighty may use, and does use, fire, or an earthquake, or a plague, or any other of His natural agents of destruction to punish sinners, so He may, with perfect right, command any of His rational subjects too to execute the same purpose, and you will also agree that when they, in obedience to His command, execute that purpose, they cannot incur guilt but do their duty, and would rather incur guilt if they refused to obey.

Men sometimes say that such a command to the Israelites to go and destroy certain nations was calculated to harden their hearts and to teach them cruelty, and therefore was unworthy of God. But such an objection will not stand examination. We cannot find fault with God's Word for declaring that God has done such and such a thing, when we see God doing the same thing before our eyes in His providence. You will acknowledge that it is according to God's will that there should be governments in this earth, and that they should execute justice. You will agree that it is a duty which God Himself has laid upon governments, and which they would be guilty in not fulfilling, that for certain crimes they should give to the perpetrators capital punishment, such as hanging, or beheading. And you know that they employ certain men who have to be constantly engaged in the most unpleasant business of hanging or beheading their fellow-men. Again, under the present circumstances of the world, Providence has made it necessary for kings to keep armies to protect their country and subjects from the invasions of lawless enemies. And when unhappily such enemies do invade the country, it becomes the duty of kings to command their soldiers to fight with the enemy and to cut the

throats of hundreds of their fellow-men, and it is the duty of a soldier to obey. Now when we see with our own eyes that God, in His Providence, does place us in circumstances in which it becomes necessary for us to do these things, can we object when we read in the Bible that the same Providence placed the Israelites under the same circumstances? But in those cases, as well as in these, such a duty would be a special trial to good and tender hearted men; but again, you must recollect that trials are the lot of all mortals in this life. But good men will do it as a duty to God, and since God has promised the aid of His grace to those who engage themselves in a trying duty as a duty, He will no doubt so assist those who shall be engaged in this particular duty that their souls will suffer no injury from any bad results of such an engagement. And in the case of the Israelites there was everything to impress upon their minds that in fighting with the nations of Canaan they were simply, as ministers of God, executing His command, for they were directly under Theocratic government. God was their King, and they were His subjects and servants. Not in that general sense in which God is the King of all, and all are His subjects; but in a special sense, He dwelt among them in a special way as their King. His Tabernacle among them was His Royal Palace, in which He signified His presence through the symbol of visible glory. He gave them special laws. He visited them by special punishment when they violated those laws, in a way in which He does not usually visit mankind at large. By His command they marched, and by His command they halted. He told them very plainly, as you have seen in those passages which I have quoted, that He only used them as His ministers to punish those wicked nations for their horrible abominations. So then you see that the Israelites knew, or at least they were clearly and distinctly told, that it was not to satisfy their own lust of possession that they had to fight with the Canaanites. But it was the Lord's battle and they were simply to engage in it as His service. And no doubt God would take care that their souls should not suffer any damage from the work which He Himself

gave them, if they would do it as His work, as He is always ready to help and preserve us all when His Providence compels us to enter into temptations and trials.

But, after all, you will say that you are not quite satisfied. You will perhaps say that however great may have been the sins of the nations of Canaan, such a wholesale destruction of them cannot be justified. How can you justify especially such commands ascribed to God in the Bible as that with regard to the Amalekites, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." So again, in the thirty-first chapter of the book of Numbers, the Israelites are said not only to have slain all the males of the Midianites indiscriminately by the command of God, but even all the women that had known men, and even all the males among the little ones. Can such an indiscriminate slaughter, you will say, in which the innocent should equally suffer with the guilty, be justified? Could any fault be found with infants, asses, and camels? Such a description shocks our moral sense, you will say; such things can never be reconciled with even human justice, much less with the perfect justice of God.

Now my answer to these objections is this, that in this matter, namely, Almighty God's causing the innocent to suffer with the guilty, not only we Christians, but all Theists as well, must confess, if they would think, that there is a mystery in it which we cannot comprehend in this life, that there must be reasons which unquestionably must justify the ways of God, but which we do not know. Pious men have tried to conjecture some reasons, and if you will consider them carefully, they will go far to satisfy your minds. And I would beg you to read what they have written on those places of the Bible which have been alluded to above. I would recommend you, for instance, Dr. Wordsworth's remarks on those places. But if those observations of pious men will not satisfy you, my answer to you is this, that if you will find fault with the God of the Bible on account of the statements contained in those places, you will have to find fault with the God of nature also on account of facts in

nature far more startling than those in the Bible. The only solutions left to you with regard to some tremendous difficulties connected with many facts in nature would be—first, to say that there must be most wise and just reasons for them, but we do not know them; and secondly, to say that this world is a place of probation and not of the distribution of rewards and punishments according to the exact measure of merits and demerits of individuals, and that all inequalities in this world will be made up in the next. And the same solution would be applicable to the dealings of God related in the Bible also.

With regard to the works of the Almighty, I beg you ever to bear in mind that it would be a great mistake to call them unjust because similar acts, if done by men, would be considered unjust. It is true that to kill women and infants would be considered a most infamous and unjust thing in men. But do you not see that God Almighty being the Lord of all lives, takes away the lives of women and infants every day?

"Killing, the most criminal act recognized by human laws," says John Stuart Mill, "*nature* does once to every being that lives; and, in a large proportion of cases, after protracted tortures, such as only the greatest monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their living fellow creatures."

Again, as regards the supposed severity in God's dealings recorded in the Old Testament, and even the charge of cruelty brought upon them, and their apparent indiscriminateness in making the innocent to suffer equally with the guilty, do you not observe what God does, before your very eyes, in nature? And I wish you to remember that though men usually say that Nature does this or that, yet you, Theists, must believe that it is God Himself that does those things. The earth does not quake of its own accord, but God causes it to quake by *His will*; nor does the cyclone move by its own will, but God moves it by His will. So that it is clear that when an earthquake, or a cyclone, or a flood, or any other so-called natural agent, brings destruction and great suffering upon towns or countries, it is really God who commands them to go and to destroy so

many towns, or countries, with all its inhabitants, men, women, children, good as well as bad, innocent as well as guilty, the sick, the old, widows and orphans, without any discrimination, precisely in the same way as He is said in the Bible to have commanded the Israelites to go and destroy the Amalekites or Midianites. Theists are ever wont to say that some acts in the Old Testament ascribed to God, are so horrible and cruel, that they cannot believe that the God of the Bible is the same as the God of nature, in whom they believe. But to me the great want of thought in these men, in uttering such words, appears far more mysterious and inexplicable than those acts of God recorded in the Old Testament. Do they always shut their eyes? Do they never see what takes place before their eyes in this world? Are the acts of God in nature less horrible (to use their own language), or do they appear less cruel than any recorded in the Bible? In my opinion the former ought to appear far more horrible and cruel to such men than the latter. For surely the suffering of a few people, slain by the edge of the sword, as recorded in the Old Testament, is nothing compared with the sufferings of men when God commands the earth to quake terribly, and large towns are overthrown by it, and men die, being buried under fallen roofs and beams, and are tormented and suffocated, or are swallowed up by fissures made in the earth. The following description of the horror of an earthquake is taken from a Cyclopædia:—

"Nothing makes such an awful impression on the senses as an earthquake. The earth is violently convulsed, heaving up and down in a manner hardly conceivable by those who have not witnessed it. The tottering buildings, the falling of the tiles, and the crashing of the timbers of the roofs, completely distract the senses. Fear drives men from their houses, but they do not always find safety out of doors. No person can stand without support: people cling to one another, to trees, or to posts. Some throw themselves on the ground; but the motion of the earth is so violent that they are obliged to stretch out their arms on each side to prevent themselves from being tossed over. Animals are equally alarmed. They stand with

their legs spread out and their heads down, trembling violently. The air itself seems to participate in the convulsion, for the birds fly about wildly. Meanwhile the sea retires from the shore; but after a few minutes it returns in a high wave, which advances like a watery wall with incredible velocity, and covers all those tracts which are not more than fifty feet above high-water mark. It rushes back with equal velocity. This motion of the sea is repeated as long as the shocks of the earthquake are violent. Vessels sailing along a coast, convulsed by an earthquake, feel also a motion quite different from that produced by gales or currents. The loss of life by earthquakes is sometimes considerable. It is chiefly produced by the falling of the buildings when the shock is so unexpected that the inhabitants have not time to escape. In some cases the overflowing of the sea has been fatal to a great number of persons. People have also been swallowed up by the fissures caused by earthquakes."

I have a long account of earthquakes, taken from the Cyclopædia of Arts and Sciences, conducted by Charles Knight. I had intended to read the whole of it to you here, but it would make this discourse too long; therefore I wish now to mention only a few instances from it. One earthquake occurred in Europe on the 1st of November in 1755, which is said to have almost destroyed the city of Lisbon. The number of persons that perished by it is stated to have been 30,000. Of course women and children and all sorts of persons must have suffered and perished by it, without discrimination. In February and March 1783 the north-eastern part of Sicily and the southern portion of Calabria were convulsed by repeated and violent shocks, which overthrew the town of Messina and killed many thousands of its inhabitants, as well as many persons in Calabria. One of the last considerable earthquakes in Europe, in the middle of the kingdom of Naples, is said to have been most destructive. The number of persons who perished by it amounted to 3,274, besides 1,615 who were wounded. In 1857, on December 16, two shocks of earthquake were felt in Southern Italy, by the destruction of buildings occasioned by which

at least 22,000 human beings were destroyed, and 4,000 wounded. Imagine the sufferings of those who were killed, being buried under fallen roofs; and there must have been among them old persons, sick persons, little children, and women with child. One city in America was destroyed by an earthquake on the 26th of March 1812, when upwards of 12,000 of its inhabitants were buried in the ruins; and the same town experienced in 1826 another earthquake, which was hardly less destructive. On the 4th of February 1797 the town of Quito was greatly damaged, and Riobomba levelled to the ground. Not less than 40,000 persons are stated to have perished by this earthquake. The town of Lima was almost entirely destroyed on the 20th of October 1687, and again on the 28th of October 1746; in this latter catastrophe the port of Callao was inundated by the sea, and the whole population perished.

And earthquakes are not the only agents by whose instrumentality it pleases Almighty God very frequently to send heavy sufferings upon his rational as well as irrational creatures; he has many other ways also. You remember how, only about three years ago, many thousand people suffered in Khandésh, being made houseless and being deprived of all their property from the rising of the river. And some two years before that I read in a newspaper that by the rising of the river Gomati at Jaunpore "ten thousand people were made houseless." You have heard of the great destruction caused in Calcutta and its vicinity by two cyclones a few years ago, at the second of which I was myself present in Calcutta. How much suffering they caused to the people there! And what is more mysterious in these calamities is that the poorest people, who are the objects of greatest pity, suffer most of all. And you know that when God Almighty sent those two cyclones in Bengal upon His creatures, and they suffered most terribly, *men* had compassion on them, and collected a large sum of money, and relieved them from their distress to a very great extent. Will you venture to say that the God of nature is very cruel, but man is more merciful than He? And yet Theists use such

language towards the God of the Bible when they hear some accounts of His judgments on sinners in the Bible. And you know who are the men who make great efforts and give away much money when great calamities are sent by the God of nature, as those by cyclones in Bengal or that in Khandesh. They are chiefly Christians. According to your way, then, of judging and passing sentence upon the acts of Almighty God, you ought to say, as John Stuart Mill has actually said, that the God of Christianity is far more merciful than the God of nature.

But I will go still further and say that by following your principle, not only may objections be raised against the goodness and justice of the God of nature by the calamities and miseries brought upon His creatures by natural causes, but even from all those most fearful sufferings which are inflicted upon the most innocent persons by their fellow-men—tyrants, despots, cruel masters, slave-dealers, &c. Because all those acts of injustice, oppression, and cruelty are done under His very eyes. And you would not call a king either merciful or just who takes no notice of an innocent sufferer, and does not deliver him, though he is suffering under his very eyes.

You see, then, gentlemen, from all the foregoing observations, how unjust and unreasonable are the objections brought by Theists against certain acts ascribed to God in the Old Testament from their supposed severity or indiscriminateness or injustice or cruelty. For we see that the acts of God in nature are infinitely more startling, and infinitely more liable to those charges of cruelty, &c., than any recorded in the Old Testament.

And now I want to tell you something which I beseech you to hear very attentively and ever to keep in your mind, for I want to tell you what is the root of all such objections which Theists feel towards the acts of God related in His Holy Word. That root is want of humility and faith. Do not condemn me hastily for saying this, for I hope to be able to show you that what I say is true. I have said that the acts of God in nature are infinitely more liable to objections than any recorded in the Bible, and yet Theists never raise or feel any objection to them,

but on the contrary they profess that they learn all their Theology from nature, and that that Theology teaches them that God is all goodness, mercy, and love. But learned atheists and sceptics feel quite differently :—

Listen to what the great logician John Stuart Mill says on this subject—

"These, then," he writes, "are the net results of Natural Theology on the question of the divine attributes. A Being of great but limited power, * * of great and perhaps unlimited understanding, but perhaps, also, more narrowly limited than his power, who desires, and pays *some* regard to, the happiness of his creatures, but who seems to have other motives of action which he cares more for, and who can hardly be supposed to have created the universe for that purpose alone. Such is the Deity whom natural religion points to; and any idea of God more captivating than this comes only from human wishes or *from the teaching of either real or imaginary revelation.*"*

"Such," he says, "are the indications of natural religion in respect to the divine benevolence. If we look for any other of the moral attributes, * * as, for example, justice, *we find a total blank.*"

You see, then, that this great logician thinks that there is no evidence whatever in nature for those moral perfections of God—His infinite benevolence, love, mercy, justice, &c.—which Theists think they learn from nature. But further, he thinks that the Author of nature might be supposed as possibly a tolerably well-meaning being, only if He be believed to be of a limited power; but if you think Him to be omnipotent, then according to Mr. Mill no more cruel and malicious being can possibly be imagined than the Author of nature. You Theists think that you find abundant proofs of the goodness and love of God in nature. But listen to what Mill says :—

"If a tenth part of the pains," he writes, "which have been expended in finding benevolent adaptations in all nature, had

* The italics are mine.

been employed in collecting evidence to blacken the character of the Creator, what scope for comment would not have been found in the entire existence of the lower animals, divided, with scarcely an exception, into devourers and devoured, and a prey to a thousand ills from which they are denied the faculties necessary for protecting themselves? If we are not obliged to believe the animal creation to be the work of a demon, it is because we need not suppose it to have been made by a being of infinite power. But if imitation of the Creator's will as revealed in nature were applied as a rule of action in this case, the most atrocious enormities of the worst men would be more than justified by the apparent intention of Providence that throughout all animated nature the strong should prey upon the weak."

You know that Dr. Colenso has been pleased to write the following words, with regard to the action of the Israelites upon the Midianites by the command of Almighty God, as recorded in the 31st chapter of Numbers:—"The tragedy of Cawnpore," he writes, "where 300 were butchered, would sink into nothing compared with such a massacre." Now here Dr. Colenso compares an act done by the command of Almighty God, recorded in His Holy Word, with an act of most inhuman cruelty perpetrated by most wicked men, and condemns the former as something far worse in cruelty and wickedness than the latter. And in Mr. Mill's judgment the animal creation would have to be believed to be "the work of a demon" if it was necessary to suppose that its author was a being of infinite power!

But both these rash and impious judgments proceed from the same cause, namely, want of humility and faith. Mr. Mill is utterly wanting in humility and faith towards God as he has revealed himself in nature, and Dr. Colenso is utterly wanting in humility and faith towards the same God as he has revealed himself in His Holy Word.

I will make one more quotation from Mill to show you how rash he was in pronouncing judgment on the work of Almighty God:—

"If the motive of the Deity," he writes, "for creating sentient beings was the happiness of the beings he created, His purpose, in our corner of the universe at least, must be pronounced, taking past ages and all countries and races into account, to have been thus far an ignominious failure; and if God had no purpose but our happiness and that of other living creatures, it is not credible that he would have called them into existence with the prospect of being so completely baffled."

Now consider, I beseech you, that while to such men as John Stuart Mill nature is full of facts which prove that the God of nature, if omnipotent and omniscient, is most unjust and cruel, how is it that you never feel so at all, though, as I have shown, the things which occur in nature are infinitely more startling than any you can point out in the Old Testament? It is because you are not wanting in humility and faith towards the God of nature, and you think, and think rightly, that we, little and insignificant worms of the dust as we are, ought not to take upon ourselves to judge the works of Almighty God, and that there may be very good reasons which would reconcile all we see in Providence with the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, and yet we may not know them. Atheists and sceptics think that it is absolutely impossible to believe that the God who has made such a world as this could be just or good, unless, as Mill says, "we blunt our inquiring intellect by sophistry." And what is the root of such perverse thought? Is it not want of humility and faith towards the Author of nature? If so, then it is clear that when men find faults with the acts of God recorded in His revelation which are infinitely less startling than those in nature, the root of it must be the same, namely, want of humility and faith in them. If objections to certain things in God's providence arise from want of humility and faith, then objections to similar things in God's Word infinitely less liable to such objections must much more reasonably be believed to proceed from the same cause. John Stuart Mill says that "The Christian Religion is open to no objections, either moral or intellectual, which do not apply at least equally to the common theory of Deism." He may be supposed in this respect

to be an unprejudiced judge I think, for he cares as little for the one as for the other. By "common theory of Deism" he of course means the belief of theists that the Author of nature is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and is perfect in goodness, benevolence, justice, wisdom, &c.

But now allow me to say that the difference between you and men like John Stuart Mill is this, that you are inconsistent but they are consistent. They are proud, and trust their poor fallible reason and condemn the revelation of Almighty God, but they equally condemn Theism also, for the same reasons lead them to do so, and that on infinitely stronger grounds. Do you know that there were some heretics, calling themselves Christians, in the early ages of the Church, called gnostics? They condemned and rejected the Old Testament, but they also condemned the Author of nature, and said that He was not the Supreme God, and so they too were consistent. If the Brahmos followed this example they would at least be consistent. The old gnostics condemned the God of the Old Testament as well as of nature as a malicious being, and held that the God of the New Testament was the good and supreme God. I say that following their own principles they were consistent, and correct in their logic. And so the great logician John Stuart Mill agrees with them, for he writes, that "The morality of the gospel is far higher and better than that which shows itself in the order of nature." And again, "The Author of the Sermon on the Mount," he writes, "is a far more benignant Being than the Author of nature." "But unfortunately," he says, "the believer in the Christian revelation is obliged to believe that the same Being is the Author of both." Well, so we are obliged to believe, and we do not think "unfortunately." And I beseech you, Sirs, to follow our example if you wish to be safe, else there is no knowing into what horrible gulf of errors you may plunge yourselves and your children!

Allow me, then, good Sirs, to give you this advice. Deal with Christianity as you deal with Theism. But I must stop here this evening, hoping to resume the subject the next time.

LECTURE III.

I ENDED my last discourse, gentlemen, with these words :— "Deal with Christianity as you deal with Theism." I wish to remind you of the same again to-day, and to show you the reasonableness of it, and add a few words to show you the reasons why such acts of the Almighty as appear rather startling to some men are so frequently recorded in the Old Testament.

It is, then, I say, most reasonable on your part, and is your bounden duty, to deal with Christianity as you deal with Theism.

You believe in the Author of nature, and believe that He is Almighty, Most Holy, Most Just, Most Merciful, &c. And you are right in believing so. It may be very difficult for any of us to draw out in words reasons for this our belief and set them forth according to the laws of logical demonstration. But though we may be incapable (and certainly the mass of men are incapable) thus to draw out in words reasons for this our belief, yet we are convinced in our hearts that it is right. Being thus convinced in our hearts, though ten thousand facts in nature are brought before us as presenting great difficulties, we are not at all moved. For we find no difficulty in believing that He who has made this immense universe, being so great, and His thoughts and counsels being so far above our conception, there may be reasons fully to justify all His ways, and yet we may be ignorant of them.

A proud logician, however, like John Stuart Mill, will not believe so, as I showed you in my last discourse. It requires humility and the principle of faith. But you believe so because you are not at present wanting in humility and faith towards the Author of nature.

But now I say that to be consistent both in your reasoning as well as in the exercise of humility and faith towards Almighty God, you ought to deal in the same way with His revelation, that is, Christianity. God has given us sufficient proofs to

show that Christianity is from God. And this fact I wish you to notice carefully, and to keep always in your mind. For it is *then* when we know that we are dealing with the things of God that we ought to be very distrustful about our own judgment, and be ready, submitting our understanding to Him, to accept them in humility and faith, knowing the nothingness of our wisdom and knowledge compared with the wisdom, knowledge and counsels of the Almighty. And this is my answer to a man that might say to me that if you require others to exercise humility and faith towards Christianity, why do you not do so towards the Vedas or the Bhagavata, or other books of other religions, but freely criticise their teaching? I would answer such a man that God Almighty has not given us any reasons to make us feel that in dealing with the contents of the Vedas or the Bhagavata we are dealing with the things of God. Now if you ask what those proofs are which show that Christianity is from God, I answer, that they are those which are called the internal and external evidences of Christianity. But I must tell you here also that you must deal with the proofs of Christianity in the same way as you deal with the proofs of Theism. Many a proud logician, who, as a punishment for his pride and for his too great reliance on his own reason, has been deprived of those natural instincts, and that intuitive sense of divine truths, which enable men to believe in those truths; many a logician, I say, of this description will tell you, as John Stuart Mill does tell us in his essay on Theism, that though there are some arguments in favour of the idea that this world is arranged by an intelligent Being, yet they do not come up to the force of a proof, and as to the proofs for the omnipotence and other moral attributes of God, there is "a total blank." If, then, you would deal in the same way and in the same spirit with the proofs of Christianity, I should not wonder to hear you say that they do not convince you.

But if one will take great care to remove from his mind those things which blind our eyes to discern the truth, namely, pride, prejudice, fear of men, &c., and will not allow that instinct in human nature to be stifled which draws men to truth

whenever it is clearly presented to them, though they may not be able to draw out in words all its grounds and set them in order before others according to the laws of logical demonstration, if, I say, one will not allow that instinct to be stifled by a wanton and hard-hearted habit of unbelief and will examine the question of Christianity, he will be impressed in his inmost soul that it comes from God.

Now I do not profess to be able to set forth in words all the grounds upon which a Christian's faith is built, and I think no one is able to do so, yet some portions of them can be shown, and I have tried to set before you one great proof for Christianity in my first address, by showing that it is only from the light of Christianity that man can learn true religion in its purity. Of course in order to feel the full force of this argument you must cast your glance over the history of religions which have appeared in the world, without borrowing any light from Christianity, and you must realize the great weakness and defects that are in the understanding of man. So that without coming in contact with Christianity, whenever man attempts to frame and teach a religion he is sure to go astray and fall into all sorts of erroneous and absurd notions about religious truths. And this fact I tried to prove in my first discourse. If you will fully realize it and call to your mind in what gross and miserable darkness we were groping, and into what precious light Christianity has brought us, and that nothing but Christianity could have brought us into this light, since it is impossible that any system invented by men could have done it; if, I say, you will think of, and realize, these things, they alone will appear sufficient to prove that Christianity is the revelation of God. "In Him was life," says St. John, "and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." "No one hath seen God at any time," says the same Evangelist, "the Only Begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." And you cannot say to me that those acts which the Old Testament ascribes to God, and which appear to us contrary to the justice and goodness of God, are the very things which go

to prove that Christianity also teaches us wrong notions about God, and therefore does not teach us pure religion. You cannot say this, I say, because I showed you in my last discourse that those acts are of the same kind as those which we see Almighty God always doing in His providence. The apparent severity, indiscriminateness, and the apparent capriciousness in God's judgments recorded in the Old Testament are seen on a far larger scale and in a far higher degree and in a far more startling character in God's providence. But a pious mind never can entertain the notion that these acts of God are really unjust or capricious or cruel. A man could say so if he could be sure that he knows all their reasons and that there was none to justify them. But what man, unless his reason is depraved by atheistical pride, could say that he knows all the mysteries of Providence, and all the reasons which move the Almighty to do what He does in heaven above or on the earth below?

You must consider that there are certain actions which in themselves can neither be pronounced just or unjust, but according to the motives by which they are done. To take away a man's life is a murder when it is done without reason or out of revenge. But when a man is hung, by the order of a government, for doing some great crime, it is considered an act of justice. Again, to give even a little pain to any creature *out of malice* is sin, but when a surgeon performs an operation upon a man's diseased limb, though he may give him the severest pain, it is thought an act of mercy to him. Suppose a very ignorant man, who has never heard of the benefits of surgical operations, were to see a surgeon performing some most painful operation upon a man, would he not call him a most cruel monster? Men of piety, then, find no difficulty in believing that they and their knowledge are less than nothing compared with the knowledge of God, and that His plans and reasons, in conducting the course of His creation, are too deep and too mysterious for them to pass any judgment on them, and that there must be good reasons to justify all His ways, but that they do not and cannot know them. And in the same way you may be quite sure that similar acts, ascribed to God in the

Bible, can never in the least vitiate the notions which Christianity teaches about God's goodness, justice, holiness, &c.

And I am thankful to say, gentlemen, that I feel quite confident that I shall be able to convince you fully of the truth of this assertion. John Stuart Mill, after charging God with all sorts of moral defects, thus writes, with reference to those who believe in and worship God, "It is impossible," he says, "that any one who habitually thinks, and who is unable to blunt his inquiring intellect by sophistry, should be able without misgiving to go on ascribing absolute perfection to the Author and Ruler of so clumsily made and capriciously governed a creation as this planet and the life of its inhabitants. The adoration of such a Being cannot be with the whole heart unless the heart is first considerably sophisticated. The worship must either be greatly overclouded by doubt, and occasionally quite darkened by it, or the moral sentiments must sink to the low level of the ordinances of nature: the worshipper must learn to think blind partiality, atrocious cruelty, and reckless injustice, not blemishes in an object of worship, since all these abound to excess in the commonest phenomena of nature." Now you know that all this is false. You know that neither you nor the great leaders of Brahmism in Bengal, Baboo Kesava Chandra Sen and others, have any "misgiving" whatever about the moral perfection of God whom they worship, on account of many startling facts in His providence. You will not believe that the "adoration" which they pay to God is "not with the whole heart," as Mill imagined; you will not acknowledge that their worship is "either greatly overclouded by doubt," or is "occasionally quite darkened by it." You will not believe that the worship of the God of nature makes a man's "moral sense sink to a low level," and leads men to "think blind partiality, atrocious cruelty, and reckless injustice to be no blemishes in an object of worship," because a man like Mill fancies that "these abound to excess in the commonest phenomena of nature."

If so, then I will never consider you unprejudiced and impartial judges if you will not also acknowledge that those acts of

God recorded in His Word, similar to those in His providence in all those points in which they appear to you objectionable, do not in the least vitiate our notions about the goodness, mercy, justice, and holiness of God.

Now although it is not for us, His creatures, to ask for reasons for what the Almighty does, yet it is good to be acquainted with them where we may. I will therefore suggest to you what appears to me to be the reason why in the history of the Old Testament such acts of God are so frequently mentioned which appear so severe and startling.

In order then to know this reason, you must know the object of the Old Testament and of its history, that is, of that particular providence of God which He manifested in the history of Israel and of those nations with whom Israel came in contact. That object was to train up a nation in the knowledge of true religion and to prepare them for the reception of the perfect revelation of God, that is, Christianity. Again, you must notice this particularly, that the chief office of the Old Testament was to set forth the Law of God, but the chief office of the New Testament is to set forth the Gospel, that is, the good tidings of salvation, offered to sinful man, by grace, though there is Gospel in the Old Testament and also Law in the New, for the Law and the Gospel cannot be separated from each other. But man must first be convinced, by law, of his sinfulness and weakness, and of the claim of Divine justice upon him, before he can either appreciate the Gospel or be benefitted by it. Now you must understand what the state of the world was when God called Abraham. The whole world was sunk in dense darkness of heathenism. The light of that revelation which God first gave to the first man, and which was handed down by tradition from father to son for a few generations, became almost extinct from the face of the earth. Men forgot the true religion, and first began to worship the sun and the moon and the elements, as our own forefathers did, at the time of the Vedas, and afterwards began to worship idols. God Almighty purposed to bring men again out of this darkness into the light of true

religion. He first called Abraham and promised to give him a numerous posterity and to establish them in the land of Canaan. It was His purpose to teach them the true religion, first in an elementary and imperfect form as Judaism was, and afterwards in its perfect form, which is Christianity, when they are prepared to receive it, and then afterwards, through them, to spread it through the whole world. And this God intimated to Abraham when he said to him, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Now these descendants of Abraham, the Israelites, taken out of the rest of the world, which was sunk in dense darkness of ignorance, were themselves like little children, and they needed a long training and an instruction like that given to children. Hence you see that to teach them the necessity of holiness and moral purity God wished to exercise them in the observance of a ceremonial law which taught them to be strict in keeping themselves pure from certain outward things which they were told to consider as polluting.. Thus God trained them up by outward and earthly figures and types to understand things spiritual and heavenly.

There was, however, another object why God gave such a law to Israel which was full of types and figures of the spiritual realities which were to be revealed by the Gospel, and not only did He give them such a law, but by a particular Providence He made even persons and events in the history of Israel to be typical of those realities. It was not only to train up their minds for the knowledge of those realities and to impress them deeply on their minds as already said, but God also had this other object, namely, to make the law and the whole Old Testament history a grand prophecy, pre-announcing by those typical ceremonies, events, and persons, the great mysteries and the glorious realities about Christ and His Kingdom, which is His Holy Catholic Church. And so if you will read the Gospels, and the epistles of S. Paul, and the expositions of the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church, you will see that the Law of Moses, the Psalms, the Prophets, and the whole history of the Old Testament, are full of figures and types of the truths which were to be fully revealed through the Gospel.

Thus S. Paul in his Epistles to the Galatians, after alluding to the history of the births of Isaac and Ishmael, says, "which things are an allegory," and then explains how they typified the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God, that is, Christianity. And if you will carefully examine this subject, you will see how wonderfully it is true. Thus what was the bondage of the children of Israel in Egypt, but a type of the bondage of the whole of mankind under sin and Satan, Pharaoh being the great type of the Prince of darkness? And what were their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, and their slaying the paschal lamb and marking the two side posts and the upper door posts of their houses with its blood; and God passing by their houses thus marked by the blood, and their escaping from the punishment wherewith God punished the whole land of Egypt? What were these but the types of the deliverance of men from sin and Satan, and from the punishment which is hanging upon the whole world on account of sin, through the atonement which Christ was to make by shedding His own blood on the cross, who is called, in Scripture, "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world?"

That marking of the houses by the Israelites by the blood of the lamb was especially a type of a Christian's partaking of the virtue of the atonement of Christ, which He made by shedding His own Blood upon the cross. So again, when the Israelites were in the wilderness and they were dying from the poison of serpents sent among them on account of their transgressions, God commanded Moses to put a brasen serpent on a pole, and said that whoever will look upon it will be cured of the effect of that poison. Now Jesus Christ Himself declares in the Gospel according to S. John that it was a type of Him. For He says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Now you know that in the Old Testament Satan is said to have tempted man in the form of a serpent and caused him to fall into sin. He is also called the Old Serpent in the New Testament. The serpents, then, by which the Israelites were bitten in the wilder-

ness were true types of Satan, and their poison was a type of sin, which he has injected, as it were, into the whole human race, and by which mankind are perishing. But the brasen serpent which Moses put on a pole was a type of Jesus Christ, lifted up on the cross. For as Satan, symbolized by a serpent, is under the curse of God on account of sin, so Jesus, though sinless in Himself, being made in the likeness of sinful flesh, "was made a curse for us," as S. Paul says. And "as a brasen serpent," says a Father of the Church, "was like a serpent, but had not the venom of a serpent, so the only begotten Son of God took our flesh, but without spot of sin." Looking upon Him, lifted up upon the cross, men are saved from sin.

I cannot however now go through the whole history of the Old Testament and explain the typical nature of everything in it as set forth in the writings of the deepest exponents of God's Word, the ancient Catholic Fathers of the Church, but I will just tell you briefly that the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea was a type of Christian Baptism, as S. Paul says in his first Epistle to the Corinthians; and their feeding upon manna in the wilderness and their drinking of the water which gushed out of the rock, were most clear types of the other great Sacrament of the Church. Again, the wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness for forty years was a type of Christians wandering in this world of their pilgrimage, and of trials and temptations; and their passing through the Jordon with dry feet was a type of Christians passing through death unhurt; and their going into Canaan, which is called in Scripture, "My [*i.e.* God's] rest," was a type of the Christians entering into heaven, the eternal rest of God.

So you see that all the great truths of Christianity and the realities of the invisible world were as it were acted before the eyes of men by means of types or certain typical events brought to pass by the will or command of God. To sum up what I have said, the chief object of the Old Testament was to set forth the law of God in order to prepare men to receive the Gospel. Now what is the work of the law with sinful man? To show him his sinfulness, weakness, and helplessness,

to make him feel that he deserves punishment, and to impress upon his mind deeply the dreadful nature of the punishment which he deserves, so that on the one hand he might dread sin, and on the other hand renounce all reliance on his own supposed goodness and strength, and flee for mercy to God. But man, who is hardened by sin, cannot easily be impressed with these things. He must be taught not only by words, but by making him experience also, in some measure, by temporal judgments, the bitter fruits of sin. Hence those severe judgments which are so frequently mentioned in the Old Testament. Those severe temporal judgments were, moreover, types and figures of that punishment which hardened impenitent sinners will receive hereafter, and which Christianity has clearly revealed.

Since, then, the business of the law is to impress these things upon sinful man, and the object of the Old Testament and of the whole course of that special providence of God which He manifested in the history of Israel, was to set forth the terrors of the law, it is in keeping with that object that you find in the Old Testament, beginning from the history of the flood, and so through the whole course of its history, frequent occurrence of severe judgments inflicted by God on sinners; and the great prophets of God, like Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha becoming the chosen instruments for the execution of many terrible judgments. You must remember that as God's mercy is great, so His holiness is also great. As the blessings that come from His mercy are great, so it is no matter of surprise that the punishments too which come from the infinite justice of God upon sinners who sin against God's infinite holiness should be great and terrible beyond our conception. And after all the real punishment of sin is never given here. That punishment is given in the next world, and though, I know, you object to the doctrine of the eternity of that punishment, yet you ought at least to acknowledge that the punishment which God's infinite justice demands must be very great, so great that all the sufferings of this life must be as nothing when compared with it. Therefore those temporal judgments

68072

of God which come upon men in this life are not properly judgments but only types of it, and are often even mercies, for they are often meant to turn sinners from their sinful course. And so if any sinners would turn from sin by their means and so escape the punishment of the next world, would they not be mercies to them?

However, if any are not satisfied with these remarks, I would then remind them that I have completely removed all objections to such acts of God, or of his servants done by the command of God, recorded in the Old Testament, which appear to them too severe and even cruel, and to which, therefore, they raise objections. I say I have completely removed all objections to such acts themselves by reminding them that God Almighty is constantly doing such acts before our eyes in His providence which might, according to the language of such objectors, be called infinitely more severe and cruel and unjust, and which *are called* so by men void of piety. Since, then, God does these acts in His Providence, no one has a shadow of reason to say that God would not do such acts or would not command Samuel or Elijah or any others to do such acts as are recorded in His Word. No one, therefore, has the slightest reason to say anything against these acts. All that I wanted to do was simply to show that it was in-keeping with the character of the Old Testament, which is chiefly to manifest the majesty of the law of God, that it sets forth so prominently the terror of the law of God and the severity of punishment which guilty sinners draw down upon themselves.

But you must not suppose from what has been said that there are no revelations of God's mercy and graciousness in the Old Testament. O no; it would be a great mistake to think so. In the very Law, in the 34th chapter of Exodus, when God showed His glory to Moses, he proclaimed Himself in the following words, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." I cannot here quote the innumerable passages from the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets, which set forth the abundance of

God's goodness and graciousness. Yes, there is sufficient and more than sufficient revelation of God's graciousness in the Old Testament for those humble minded and pious souls who lived under it, but, as I said, its principal object seems to be to set forth the Law and its severity and terrors in order to bring hardened sinners to the sense of their sins and of the severity of God's justice.

And likewise even the New Testament, while its principal office is to manifest God's amazing love and free grace to sinners, does sometimes set before us the terror of God's law and justice too. So in the Acts of the Apostles, that history which sets forth the love, the tenderness, the meekness, and the patience of Christ manifested, marvellously, in the lives and acts and sufferings of the Apostles and martyrs, there is found the manifestation of the rigour of God's justice in the instant death of Ananias and Sapphira for telling a single lie before the Apostle St. Peter. Thus, as I said before, there is Law in the New Testament, and there is Gospel in the Old also. But to set forth the Law is the chief office of the Old, and to set forth the Gospel the chief office of the New Testament. And you see this characteristic difference in the very initiatory Sacraments of the Old and New Testaments.

The very initiatory rite of the Old Testament is circumcision, in which there is a shedding of blood; and that of the New Testament, baptism, *i.e.* washing with water, an element whose property is to cleanse, refresh, and revive. Again, the principal worship of the Old Testament consisted in the sacrifices of animals, always reminding the worshipper of the death which he himself deserved from the justice of God, though at the same time preaching to an humble minded believer the gospel of God's mercy, by pointing to the future sacrifice of the Lamb of God for the sins of the whole world. For I said above that all things in the Old Testament were figures and types of the things which were to be revealed by Christianity, and so all the animal sacrifices of the Old Testament were types exhibiting, in various ways, the various aspects of the one future sacrifice which the Son of God was to offer Himself on the altar of the cross.

And let not this also surprise you that Almighty God should command the sacrifices of animals. For you must recollect that it is by His own will and appointment that millions and millions of animals daily die. It is a difficulty connected with Theism as much as with Revelation why animals which are incapable of committing any moral fault should suffer even the least pain or should die. It is however a fact that God Almighty does make them too sharers in the miseries of man, His rational and guilty creature, and it is His will and appointment that they should die, and, if left to themselves, die mostly with pain and suffering. There is then nothing incredible that God, commanding men to offer them as sacrifices, should make their death subservient for the spiritual advantage of men, His highest creatures on earth, for whose use animals and all other things evidently seem to have been intended. And in this way the fate of animals is not made more hard but rather far more easy. For according to the appointment of God in nature the animals would die if not sacrificed, but die after much suffering and pain, whereas when they are sacrificed they die an easy and almost painless death.

While, however, the principal worship of the Old Testament consisted in the sacrifices of animals, the principal worship of the Catholic Church consists in that unbloody sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist in which we plead before the Eternal Father the merits of the great sacrifice offered on the Cross for the whole world once for all, and in which the church offers thanks and praise to the Almighty Father for His wondrous and unspeakable love in giving His only Begotten Son for our Salvation and for all the graces and gifts springing from that love; for which reason this sacrifice, this great यज्ञ of the the Catholic Church, is called Eucharist, and a "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving."

There is also a remarkable incident related in the gospel of St. Luke, that when once Jesus Christ, in His journey to Jerusalem, passed through a village of Samaria and the Samaritans did not receive him, his two zealous disciples, James and John, not bearing this indignity offered to their Master,

asked him if they might pray for fire to be sent down from heaven to burn the village of such wicked men, as the great prophet Elijah had done before, and punished the godless servants of the godless king of Israel, Ahaziah. But Jesus Christ, it is said, "rebuked them, and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them," that is to say, you do not know the nature of the gospel dispensation whose minister I am, and whose minister I intend to make you, and you do not exhibit the spirit befitting this dispensation. For it is a dispensation of mercy, and its office is to proclaim salvation to sinners and not punishment. Whereas those holy men of God like Elijah and others were ministers of a dispensation in which it pleased the Almighty to manifest the majesty of His law, and the judgments upon those who transgressed that law, though those judgments were, let it be remembered, only of this world, and therefore, while calculated to awaken sinners, by pointing out to them the terrible consequences of sin, yet did not really hurt the souls of such as would repent and turn to God, but were rather means of purifying them, as all sufferings of this world are, and so of making them partakers of the true and everlasting happiness hereafter. Those holy men of God, then, like Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, being minsters of such a dispensation, though in themselves full of love, and tender-hearted, as is clear from other parts of their history, were obliged to execute the commands of the Almighty, their King, and so became ministers of His judgments. And that you may be sure that these holy men were really tender-hearted, though they executed the terrible judgments of God, I will adduce one instance to show it. It is stated in the first book of kings that in order to punish the Israelites for their wickedness, God commanded Elijah to "anoint Hazael to be King over Syria." This was done by Elijah, not in his person, but through his disciple, the great prophet Elisha, who went to Damascus for that very purpose. But when Hazael came to him, and Elisha saw him, it is said, that he settled his countenance upon Hazael stedfastly and wept. When Hazael asked him

"Why weepeth my lord," Elisha answered, saying, "I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel; their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child."

I hope, gentlemen, these remarks about the peculiar nature of the Old Testament dispensation will have explained to you why we find in it so frequently the terrible judgments of God sent down upon individuals or nations, like which, however, and even far more severe and terrible we constantly see Almighty God sending in His ordinary providence also. And believe me that the lessons which that part of God's word, namely, the Old Testament, imparts were not only needful for men of that age, but they are as needful for us also. And whoever will read it even now, not in the spirit of hard-hearted impiety, like that of John Stuart Mill, proudly sitting in judgment on the acts of Almighty God, but in the spirit of profound humility, acknowledging the utter nothingness of his own understanding and knowledge compared with the incomprehensible wisdom and deep counsels of the most High, with which He does all things in heaven and in earth to accomplish His own wise, just, and merciful purposes; whoever, I say, will read in this spirit the Old Testament, he will find by experience what a new sense it gives him of God's awful holiness and justice, and of the heinousness and hatefulness of sin in God's sight, and of the necessity of our becoming holy if we wish to be His, a sense which no religion or philosophical system invented by men, can ever impart.

LECTURE IV.

In my first discourse I endeavoured to show you, gentlemen, that there is some such weakness and some such defect in man's understanding with respect to divine and religious truths, though he may be very clever in other things, that whenever he tries to think or teach them without the aid of revelation, he is sure to go astray and to fall into all sorts of errors; and that Christianity, which alone teaches us the true religion in its purity, can never be a production of the human mind, but must be the revelation of God, as indeed it claims to be.

Then I said that you think that there are some objectionable points in Christianity also and that you do not think that even Christianity teaches us a perfectly pure religion, and therefore you would not accept my conclusion that it is a revelation of God. But I also said that I would be glad to say something at other times about those points against which you feel objections. Accordingly I tried, in the second and third discourses, to remove one of those objections, namely, your objection against certain judgments of God sent upon sinners, either directly from Himself or through the instrumentality of men, as recorded in the Old Testament. Now following the same course, I ought to go on dealing with other objections. And I think it is not difficult to do so, and I trust that by God's assistance all those objections can easily be removed. But I wish to stop in this course for the present, and would first draw your attention to one of the positive proofs which establish the divine origin of Christianity. And indeed that is the first thing we ought to seek after. We ought first to ascertain whether there are positive proofs to show that Christianity is a revelation of God. For if it be a revelation of God, then surely it is not for us, poor worms of earth, to bring everything that God has revealed before the judgment-seat of our poor reason, and

accept it if our reason is satisfied, and reject it if that reason is not satisfied. How can it be that all the things which God has revealed should tally exactly with every one's notions while we know how fallible we are, and how many causes there are to give a wrong bias to our minds, and to train them up in errors, and make them apt to think that to be objectionable against which there are no real objections. I showed you in my last discourse that unless we consider our reason as nothing, and exercise humility and faith towards the things of God, we can neither retain our faith in revelation nor in Theism.

Now among the positive proofs of Christianity are the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. You must know that Jesus Christ and His Apostles appealed to the miracles which they wrought to prove the truth of their divine mission. When S. John the Baptist sent messengers to Christ, asking Him, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up."

Again, at another time, He said to the Jews, "I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." At another time, again, He said to one of the Apostles, Philip, "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake."

And so S. Paul also speaks of miracles as signs of an apostle. For he says to the Corinthians, "Truly the signs of an Apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds."

Now you will say that there are stories of miracles related in the accounts of all those also who are supposed to be saints by adherents of other religions. If we must believe in Christ's miracles we must believe in the miracles of all those men also; but if they were not true, how can we believe that Christ's miracles were true? I answer in the first place that I have

shown in my first discourse the very great difference that there is between all other religions and Christianity. How full of all sorts of errors and unworthy notions about God and about other truths all those religions are, which proves that they are not from God, but are the inventions of men, and therefore *it cannot be believed* that God would work miracles to uphold falsehood and error. But on the contrary, Christianity, from the very incomparable excellency of its teaching, is proved to be a religion not capable of being invented by men, but to be one which can only have come from God by revelation, and therefore it is only reasonable to expect that God should manifest His power by the performance of miracles in attestation of its truth. Then, again, look at the nature of Christ's miracles and the nature of those related in books of other religions, and your common sense will tell you that there is no comparison between them; for Christ's miracles were miracles of mercy, they were outward symbols of that more mighty and gracious work which He, as the Saviour of men, came to work upon the souls of men. His cleansing a leper was an outward symbol of His cleansing the soul from the leprosy of sin; His giving sight to the blind was a symbol of His opening the eyes of our minds. But look how absurd are the accounts of most of the miraculous acts contained in books of other religions. Krishna is said to have lifted the hill called Govardhana upon his finger. For what purpose? Because he forbade the people of Gokula to worship Indra, whom it had been their custom for generations to worship, and advised them to worship the hill Govardhana instead. What improvement was it upon the worship of Indra? However, Indra is said to have got very angry and caused it to rain so heavily that the whole of Gokula was in danger of being washed away. And therefore Krishna lifted the hill Goverdhana over Gokula to protect it. Surely you will not ask me why I do not believe in such stories.

But the truth of Christ's miracles is proved by a strong body of historical evidence, while no evidence whatever can be found to establish the truth of miracles that are related in the books of other religions.

And I beg you to keep this one thing in your mind, that our being certain or uncertain about the truth of an event does not depend at all on the nearness or remoteness of that event either in time or space, but upon the strength or weakness of the evidence or of that medium through which the knowledge of that event is conveyed to us. Alexander the Great, for instance, lived long before Christ; yet no one who knows anything of history entertains the least doubt that there was such a man as Alexander the Great, the son of Philip, the King of Macedonia; that he conquered the Persians and spread his dominion far and wide, and reached even as far as the borders of India; and that, when returning home, he became sick of fever at Babylon, and died there in the prime of his life.

We do not entertain any doubt, I say, either about the existence of Alexander, or about these events in his history, though he lived more than two thousand years ago, and yet we often remain in great doubt about the truth of events which are said to take place in our own time. Why? because we are satisfied about the validity of the evidence which we have for the history of Alexander, while we find that for many events which are reported as having taken place in our own time, the evidence is not satisfactory.

Dismiss therefore from your minds for ever that idle way of speaking by which some persons throw doubt on everything by saying, "How can we make ourselves sure about events which are said to have taken place eighteen hundred years ago?" No, we have only to examine the evidences of those events carefully, and if they are valid and we are satisfied about their validity, we shall be certain about them though they may have occurred eighteen hundred or even eighteen thousand years ago.

Now you know that there are four Gospels which contain accounts of Christ's miracles. Two of these Gospels are written by two of Christ's own disciples, His constant companions, Matthew and John, and the other two by persons who lived in intimate connection with those disciples, Mark and Luke.

Now a very important part of the historical argument for the truth of Christ's miracles is to show that these Gospels are genuine, that is, that they are written by those very persons whose names they bear. I will therefore try to show this first, and the way of doing it is to bring proofs of this fact from the many authors who flourished and wrote from the early part of the second century and afterwards. I cannot, however, quote here all the passages from ancient authors in proof of the genuineness of the Gospels. I will only quote a few, and to a few again I will simply allude.

Nor is it necessary to bring proofs from every century beginning from the present. I will therefore go up at once to a very learned Christian father, and a voluminous writer, whose name was Origen, and who was born about the year 186, and was, from his childhood, carefully trained, both in literature and in religion, by his Father Leonidas, who was a Christian. Some of his works are now lost, but some remain, and they show abundantly that in his time, that is, in the first quarter of the third century, these four Gospels were received, not only as genuine, but as authentic and authoritative, and even as divinely inspired books, by Christians throughout the whole world. Quotations of Scripture are so thickly sown in the books of Origen, that it has been remarked that "if we had all his works remaining, we should have before us almost the whole text of the Bible." Now there are some spurious Gospels, called Apocryphal Gospels, but the Catholic Church never received them, because their genuineness cannot be proved. Some of these existed even so early as the second century. Origen mentions some of them, but only in order to censure them. And in one passage of his, quoted by Eusebius, he tells us that the Christian Church never acknowledged any other Gospels besides these four. For he says in that passage, "That the four Gospels alone are uncontroverted in the Church of God spread under heaven." What a noble testimony this is for the universal reception of our Gospels at that time. Now I wish to mention something here by the way.

A Bengali Baboo, at Lucknow, who was a Brahmo I think,

after embracing Christianity, rejected it and became a Brahmo again. He has published a pamphlet in which he gives an account of these events. In that account I read the following words, "I repaired to the Brahmo Missionary, Baboo Mahendro Nath Bose, who gave me a brief resume of the early history of Christianity, and the manner in which the four Gospels were selected, as the record of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Never, I confess, was I more surprised than when I was told that in a lottery at the Council of Nice these Gospels, on the supposed authenticity of which hangs the belief of so many human beings, were selected, and that more than 120 other versions of Gospels existed which were rejected by mere chance as Apocrypha."

Now remember, gentlemen, the Council of Nice took place at the end of the first quarter of the fourth century, and Origen flourished at the beginning of the third century, that is, a hundred years before that Council. And from that passage of Origen which I quoted above, as well as from his other writings, it is clear that the four Gospels, and they alone, were received by the whole Christian Church as the only true and authentic Gospels in Origen's time, that is, a hundred years before the Council of Nice. And that the belief of the Christian Church with regard to the Gospels was the same even long before the time of Origen appears from the writings of other Christian Fathers who lived before Origen. You will also see from some passages which I will quote that the Church, both before as well as after Origen's time, received these four Gospels as the only true Gospels, not by "lottery" or by "mere chance," but by a careful investigation of historical proofs. What, then, do you think of that Brahmo Missionary who thus misled his inquirer by giving him that false information? Can you consider such men earnest seekers after God's truth? Can we expect that God will reveal His truth to us when we are so careless about making use of the means which He has provided for our attaining to the knowledge of His truth? I must tell you that in those parts of India where I have been hitherto, I always found that the Brahmos have

never troubled themselves with examining the evidences of Christianity, and yet they would dare to set up a new religion, would dare to set Christianity at naught and reject it, would dare to think that so many philosophers, profound thinkers, men of vast learning and research, masters of historical criticism, and acute investigators, were such exquisite fools, so incredibly childish as to let their religious belief hang upon records which had no better foundation to rest their authenticity upon than "lottery" and "chance."

All this, however, by the way. I will now proceed to give you proofs for the genuineness of the Gospels. There was another very learned father of the Church, Tertullian, who was born about the year 160, and another who is known as Clement of Alexandria, who was born about the year 165, and another by name Irenæus, who was born about the year 120 or 30. All these Fathers have written large works, and their writings show, not only that the four Gospels existed in their times, and not only that they themselves fully believed them to be genuine and credible, but that they were so believed by all Christians of their times. And remember that these fathers lived in places distant from each other. For S. Irenæus lived in France; S. Clement at Alexandria; Tertullian at Carthage; another father of the same age, Theophilus, whose name I did not mention before, but whose writings also bear testimony to the Gospels, lived at Antioch. There were also other writers beside these in that age whose writings bear testimony to the Gospel, but I have omitted their names. The consent, then, of all these fathers, who lived so near the time of the Apostles, and not only their consent, but the consent of all Christians of their times about the genuineness of the Gospels, is a great proof of it. And the following considerations will show you that the testimony of these fathers to the genuineness of the Gospels is quite sufficient to prove it.

First, we have evidence to prove that these fathers and the Christians of their time were not careless to ascertain whether the books which they were to receive into their canon, as books of authority in matters of faith, were really genuine or not, and

that they did not receive what they did receive from credulity, but that they were most careful and scrupulous in this matter. There are certain books in our present Canon of the New Testament, which are now accepted, and have been accepted for many centuries by the whole Catholic Church, as inspired and as a true portion of the New Testament, but in the first ages of Christianity, in the times of the above-named fathers, doubts were entertained about them from some reason or other, and many of the Christians hesitated to accept them. Such were the 2nd Epistle of S. Peter, and the 2nd and 3rd Epistles of S. John.

This fact shows that they were very careful in receiving books into their canon. I quote here Doctor Paley's words :— "The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen epistles of S. Paul, the First Epistle of S. John, and the First of Peter, were received without doubt by those who doubted concerning the other books which are included in our present Canon."

"I state this proposition," continues Doctor Paley, "because, if made out, it shows that the authenticity of their books was a subject, among the early Christians, of consideration and inquiry; and that, where there was cause of doubt, they did doubt; a circumstance which strengthens very much their testimony to such books as were received by them with full acquiescence."

Origen, that most learned father whom I already mentioned, and who flourished at the beginning of the third century, says, "Peter has left one epistle, acknowledged; let it be granted likewise that he wrote a second, for it is doubted." And of John he says, "he has also left one Epistle, of a few lines; grant also a second and a third, for all do not allow these to be genuine." Remember now that the same Origen, who thus discriminates and thus confesses his own doubts, and the doubts which subsisted in his time, expressly witnesses concerning the four Gospels that they alone are received without dispute by the whole church of God under heaven.

A second consideration is this. We have positive proofs that the method which the fathers of those times adopted in ascer-

taining the genuineness of those books which they accepted as canonical was not "lottery," as that Brahmo missionary taught to his truth-seeking pupil, but it was that of collecting testimonies of writers who followed one after another in an uninterrupted succession from the time of the Apostles to their own times. The learned church historian, Eusebius, who lived at the beginning of the fourth century, and who was extremely conversant with the writings of Christians which had been published from the commencement of the institution of Christianity to his own time, after speaking of the books which he calls spurious, says, "none of the ecclesiastical writers, in the succession of the Apostles, have vouchsafed to make any mention of them in their writings."

In another passage of the same work, Eusebius, speaking of the first epistle of S. Peter, says, "This the Presbyters of ancient times have quoted in their writings as undoubtedly genuine;" and then, speaking of some other writings bearing the name of Peter, "We know," he says, "that they have not been delivered down to us in the number of Catholic writings, forasmuch as no ecclesiastical writer of the ancients, or of our times, has made use of testimonies out of them." "But in the progress of this history," the author proceeds, "we shall make it our business to show, together with the successions from the Apostles, what ecclesiastical writers *in every age* have used such writings as these which are contradicted, and what they have said with regard to the Scriptures received in the New Testament, and *acknowledged by all*, and with regard to those which are not such." So far Eusebius, who lived in the beginning of the fourth century. The following passage from Tertullian, who flourished at the end of the second century, shows the same thing, namely, that the ancient Fathers of the Church made diligent inquiries through the time that intervened between them and the Apostles to ascertain the genuineness of books which they accepted as canonical. "If," says Tertullian, "it is acknowledged that that is more true which is more ancient, that more ancient which is even from the beginning, that from the beginning which is from the Apostles; it will in like

manner assuredly be acknowledged that that has been derived by tradition from the Apostles which has been preserved inviolate in the churches of the Apostles. Let us see what milk the Corinthians drank from Paul; to what rule the Galatians were recalled by his reproofs; what is read by the Philippians, the Thessalonians, the Ephesians; what is the testimony of the Romans, who are nearest to us, to whom Peter and Paul left the Gospel, and that sealed by their own blood. We have moreover churches founded by John. For even if Marcion rejects his Apocalypse, still the succession of Bishops (in the seven Churches), if traced to its source, will rest on the authority of John. And the noble descent of other Churches is recognized in the same manner. I say, then, that among them, and not only among the Apostolic Churches, but among all the Churches which are united with them in Christian fellowship, that Gospel of Luke which we earnestly defend has been maintained from *its first publication.*" And "the same authority of the Apostolic Churches will uphold the other Gospels which we have in due succession through them and according to their usage, I mean those of (the Apostles) Matthew and John; although that which was published by Mark may also be maintained to be Peter's, whose interpreter Mark was: for the narrative of Luke also is generally ascribed to Paul: (since) it is allowable that that which scholars publish should be regarded as their master's work." In another place Tertullian affirms that the three other Gospels were in the hands of the Churches from the beginning, as well as Luke's. This noble testimony fixes the universality with which the Gospels were received, and their antiquity; that they were in the hands of all and had been so from the first.

Thirdly, we have positive proof to show that those Fathers were most careful to ascertain that what they believed as religious truth was really taught by the Apostles, and that they were fully able to do so, for they were well acquainted with the succession of Bishops which intervened between them and the Apostles, and that this succession of Bishops from the times of the Apostles, and their doctrines, were so well known in all the

principal churches, and through them to other churches, that no one could be imposed upon in this matter. Thus, S. Irenæus, who was born, remember, about the year 120 or 130, says, "Those who wish to see the truth, may find the tradition of the Apostles manifested in the whole church throughout all the world; and we are able to number up those who were appointed by the Apostles to be Bishops in churches and their successors to our days. It is by this uninterrupted succession that we have received the tradition which actually exists in the church, as also the doctrines of truth as it was preached by the Apostles." The same S. Irenæus also "appeals to the known succession of teachers in the churches of Rome, Smyrna, and Ephesus, who held fast up to his own time the doctrine which they had received from the first age. So it is possible that he used writings as genuine and authoritative which were not recognized by those who must have had unquestionable means of deciding on their Apostlic origin."*

Another Father of the same age, S. Clement of Alexandria, says, "These men, preserving the true tradition of the blessed teaching, directly from Peter and James, from John and Paul, the holy Apostles, son receiving it from father, (but few are they who are like their fathers,) come by God's Providence even to us, to deposit among us those seeds [of truth] which were derived from their ancestors and the Apostles."

All these considerations show that the unanimous testimonies of the Fathers who flourished from the second half of the second to the first quarter of the third century are sufficient to prove the genuineness of our Gospels, remembering also that the writings of those Fathers do not only tell their own belief regarding the Gospels, but that of the whole church spread under heaven, not only of their own time but of much earlier time. If to these testimonies we add those of still earlier times, the proof becomes still stronger.

Now among the testimonies of earlier times I would mention first that of S. Justin Martyr. He was born about the year 103.

* Westcott on the Canon of the N. T., p. 297.

"He lived within the half century following the death of the Apostle S. John. But his means of information reached back into the Apostolic age itself. He was acquainted with Christians of advanced age of every race who had been believers from their childhood. [His testimony to the Gospels is therefore almost as good as that of a contemporary.] He was, moreover, a person of inquisitive temper; and his life was spent in various localities, and in intercourse and discussions with men of all sects and opinions. He was apparently what we should call an itinerant teacher."* S. Justin giving, in his first Apology, an account to the emperor of the Christian worship, writes these remarkable words, "The *Memoirs of the Apostles*, or the writings of the Prophets, are read according as the time allows: and, when the reader has ended, the president makes a discourse, exhorting to the imitation of so excellent things."

The Memoirs of the Apostles, Justin in another place expressly tells us, are what are called Gospels, and that they were the Gospels which we now use, is made certain by Justin's numerous quotations of them. He also says in another place that they were composed by Apostles and their followers, a description exactly corresponding with our Gospels, for two of

* Preface to the translation of Works of S. Justin the Martyr, Library of the Fathers, vol. 40,—"After his conversion he seems to have considered it his calling to endeavour to win from their errors men of every nation, Jews and Gentiles, and those who under the name of Christians taught what was untrue. It was when he was on a voyage that he met with Trypho [a Jew]; Eusebius says at Ephesus; he lived some time at Rome; there he published his Apologies at long severed periods, and received the crown of martyrdom. He had therefore ample means of knowing what was the faith and practice of Christians throughout the world in his own as well as in earlier times. His honesty, his fairness, his love of truth, and caution not to state anything of which he was not assured, are manifest throughout his works."

"These reasons for confiding in the correctness of his representations are confirmed by the fact that he published the dialogue with Trypho as an assurance to the Jews that his statements respecting the Christian doctrines were true; challenging contradiction, if he had misrepresented them. And his trustworthiness is attested by the reliance placed on him by the writers who come nearest to his own time."

them are written by Apostles, Matthew and John, and two by their followers, Mark and Luke.* Justin describes the general usage of the Christian Church. Justin does not speak of it as recent or newly instituted, but in the terms in which men speak of established customs.

The second proof I bring from a writing called the Epistle of Barnabas. Its *genuineness* is questioned by some, that is, some suppose that it was not written by the person whose name it bears. But there can be no doubt of its antiquity (which is all that matters for our argument) for it is quoted by S. Clement of Alexandria, as the Epistle of Barnabas A.D. 194, and by Origen, A.D. 230. It is mentioned by Eusebius, A.D. 315, and by S. Jerome, A.D. 392, as an ancient work in their times, and as well known and read among Christians, though not accounted a part of Scripture. It purports to have been written soon after the destruction of Jerusalem, that is, before the end of the first century, and it bears the character of the age to which it professes to belong. Now in this Epistle there is an unmistakable quotation from the Gospel of S. Matthew. And the quotation is made with these words, "As it is written." Now the writer of the Epistle was a Jew, and the Jews quoted their scriptures in that very form. From this quotation, therefore, it is proved, not only that the Gospel of S. Matthew existed at the time when this author lived, but that it was well known to Christians of that time and was considered a book of authority among them.

* The attempts of the author of "Supernatural Religion" to throw doubts on the testimony of S. Justin, as well as on that of Papias, (which I am going to refer to,) to our Gospels are so despicable, that I do not think them worth taking notice of. Canon Westcott has shown the groundlessness and unreasonableness of those doubts in his "History of the Canon of the New Testament." If any one wishes to see the worthlessness of the book called "Supernatural Religion," let him read Canon Westcott's preface to the fourth edition of his "History of the Canon of the New Testament," and Canon Lightfoot's articles in the *Contemporary Review* for December 1874 and January and February 1875. These ought to open people's eyes to the recklessness with which the Bible is sometimes assailed by so-called liberal critics.

The third proof I bring from Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis, in Phrygia, who flourished in the early part of the second century. This author, in a passage quoted by Eusebius, from a work now lost, expressly ascribes the respective Gospels to Matthew and Mark, and in a manner which proves that these Gospels must have publicly borne the names of these authors at that time, and probably long before.

Now Papias tells us in the passage quoted from him by Eusebius that he had been acquainted with those who had been acquainted with the Apostles and other disciples of Christ, and had inquired many things from them. Of how great value, then, is the testimony of Papias to the Gospels of S. Mathew and S. Mark! Nay, in giving the account of the Gospel of S. Mark, Papias tells us expressly that he received it from John the Presbyter, whom he reckons among the disciples of the Lord. So you see it is in fact a testimony of a contemporary of the Apostles, coming to us through Papias. The very short sentence which Eusebius quoted from Papias about S. Matthew's Gospel, without giving any context, does not authorise us to say the same thing about his testimony to S. Matthew's Gospel, though there can be little doubt that this testimony too comes from a contemporary of the Apostles. At any rate, well acquainted as he was with those who had known the Apostles, his testimony to S. Matthew, too, may be reckoned almost as good as that of the contemporaries of the Apostles.

I will now mention two authors who were the very contemporaries of the Apostles, S. Clement of Rome, and S. Polycarp of Smyrna. In their writings still extant there are clear quotations from our Gospels. Men have, however, raised doubts about these quotations, because these authors have not used words of quotation.

The following observations of Dr. Paley will show that there is no sufficient ground for such a doubt, and that they very probably did quote from the Gospels.

First, that Clement, in the very same manner, namely, without any mark of reference, uses a passage now found in the epistle to the Romans, which passage, from the peculiarity

of the words which compose it, and from their order, it is manifest that he must have taken from the book. Secondly, that there are many sentences of S. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, standing in Clement's epistle, without any sign of quotation, which yet certainly are quotations; because it appears that Clement had S. Paul's epistle before him, inasmuch as in one place he mentions it in terms too express to leave us in any doubt. "Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul." Thirdly, that this method of adopting words of Scripture without reference or acknowledgment was a method in general use among the most ancient Christian writers. These analogies not only repel the objection, but cast the presumption on the other side, and afford a considerable degree of positive proof, that the words in question have been borrowed from the places of Scripture in which we now find them. As, however, there is room to doubt, I will not lay much stress upon these two authors as by themselves affording undoubted testimony to the Gospels. Still it is useful to refer to them. For in the case of moral certainty, which is the result of accumulation of proofs, rather than of one definite proof, one ought to take into consideration such proofs also as are by themselves and alone insufficient to establish a fact, but when added to others more certain, have their value.

Now the next proof for the Gospels which I wish to adduce is this. Eusebius relates that Quadratus and some others who were the immediate successors of the Apostles, travelling abroad to preach Christ, carried the Gospels with them and delivered them to their converts. Eusebius had before him the writings both of Quadratus himself, and of many others of that age which are now lost. It is reasonable therefore to believe that he had good grounds for his assertion.

In the next place I bring the testimony of S. Irenæus again. For although he has been already mentioned as one belonging to that group of authors which belongs to the last quarter of the second century, yet there are reasons which make his testimony more valuable than that of his contemporaries, and make it in fact almost as good as that of con-

temporaries of the Apostles. For in the first place he was a disciple of S. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who was a disciple of S. John. In his epistle to Florinus, S. Irenæus writes, "I can tell also the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse; and also his entrances, his walks, the complexion of his life, and the form of his body, and his conversations with the people, and his familiar intercourse with John, as he was accustomed to tell, as also his familiarity with those that had seen the Lord. How also he used to relate their discourses, and what things he had heard from them concerning the Lord. Also concerning His miracles, His doctrine, all these were told by Polycarp, in consistency with the Holy Scriptures, as he had received them from the eye-witnesses of the doctrine of salvation. These things, by the mercy of God, and the opportunity then afforded me, I attentively heard, noting them down, not on paper, but in my heart; and these same facts I am always in the habit, by the grace of God, of recalling faithfully to mind." I have shown you also from another passage of his how zealous S. Irenæus was in preserving incorrupt the teaching of the Apostles. Is it then possible that he who was taught of Polycarp, the disciple of S. John, was himself deceived as to the genuine writings of S. John? This consideration, then, shows that the testimony of S. Irenæus is of itself sufficient to prove the genuineness of S. John's Gospel. But this is not all. S. Irenæus mentions some elders in his writings whom he knew and whom he calls disciples of Apostles. In the sayings of these elders quoted by S. Irenæus there are quotations from the Gospels. Thus also he leads us to the very contemporaries of the Apostles and makes us acquainted with their testimonies to the Gospels.

Again, the churches of Lyons and Vienne, in France, sent a relation of the sufferings of their martyrs to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia about the year 170. The epistle is preserved entire by Eusebius. In this epistle are exact references to the Gospels of Luke and John. And what carries in some measure the testimony of these churches to a higher age, is, that they

had now for their Bishop Pothinus, who was ninety years old, whose early life consequently must have immediately joined on with the times of the Apostles. In one of these churches S. Irenæus was then a priest and afterwards succeeded Pothinus in the Episcopate, and so his more explicit and more copious testimony to the Gospels throws light on the references that are made to the same in that aforementioned epistle and makes them certain.

Again, proofs for the genuineness of the Gospels are found also in the testimony of the early adversaries of Christianity. This proof also must be acknowledged to be of some weight. For to those who wanted to refute Christianity it would have been much more convenient to show, if they could, that the Gospels were later forgeries than to acknowledge their genuineness, as they did, and try to refute Christianity in another way. Near the middle of the second century Celsus, a heathen philosopher, wrote a professed treatise against Christianity, to which Origen published an answer. The work of Celsus is lost, but that of Origen remains. In this Origen has quoted portions of Celsus's work, and from them it appears that these Gospels were as well known and acknowledged by Christians as authoritative at that time as they are now, and Celsus treated them as such.

There is yet another source from which testimonies can be obtained to the genuineness of the Gospels, and it is of such a character that the testimony derived from it makes the genuineness of the Gospels quite certain. That source is the early Christian heretics. S. Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, and later writers insist much and earnestly on the facts that heretics sought to maintain their own doctrines from the canonical books.* "So great is the surety of the Gospels," says S. Irenæus, "that even the very heretics bear witness to them, so that each one of them taking the Gospels as his starting point, endeavours thereby to maintain his own teaching."†

* Westcott on the Canon of the N. T., p. 238.

† Ibid.

Now remember that those heretics promulgated doctrines which were altogether opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church. They would not therefore have accepted the Gospels unless there had been proofs for their genuineness and authenticity which were even in the eyes of those heretics quite irresistible. They had to put forced and extravagant interpretations upon the words of the Gospels to reconcile them with their views. Surely they would rather have rejected them as no authorities if it were possible for them to do so, than betake themselves to such expedients.

Remember this also, that among the founders of those heretical sects some were contemporaries of the Apostles and some lived in the very next generation after the Apostles. One famous heretic of the Valentinian school, Heracleon, did actually write commentaries on the Gospels of S. Luke and S. John. I will mention yet another proof, but it is not based on external testimony, but on an internal phenomenon in the Gospels themselves. And this proof also is so great in my opinion, that it alone is sufficient to produce a strong persuasion in one's mind not only that our Gospels must be genuine, but that they must be true also. There are a very large number of spurious Gospels mentioned by ecclesiastical writers. Many of them are still extant. I think a few of them existed even so early as the second century. If you read any of them you will be struck at once with the great difference that will appear to you between them and our four Gospels. Their extravagance and legendary character become apparent to every one that reads them. Now I say that every one of those many so-called Gospels is stamped with this character, and these four Gospels alone bear a character quite distinct from theirs. Now what is the reason of this? None other than this, that while those Gospels are forgeries, these are genuine and true. It is proved that forgeries cannot be written in the way in which our Gospels are written. Add to this the fact that the church has selected these four Gospels only as genuine and true. And you have seen that the ancient fathers who have selected these Gospels did not do so from credulity and

carelessness, but that they were very careful and scrupulous and that they did so by careful investigation and on solid ground.

These two facts, then, namely, the internal character of these Gospels and the selection of them by the unanimous consent of the church and that after careful investigation,—these two facts, I say, make together a very strong proof indeed, quite sufficient to produce moral certainty in a candid mind. Moreover the fact that out of so many spurious Gospels the church should select these four only, proves that her doctors were possessed with great power of criticism, and repels the charge of credulity in this matter brought against them by evil-minded opponents of Christianity.

I will mention yet another proof, which is also of the nature of an internal evidence. This proof however has reference to the Gospel of S. Luke only. In the beginning of "The Acts of the Apostles," the author says that he himself was the writer of the Gospel of S. Luke. Now it appears that the author of "The Acts of the Apostles," was a companion and a fellow traveller of S. Paul. How does it appear? He does not tell us so in so many words anywhere in that book. But in the sixteenth chapter, and in several places afterwards, in giving an account of S. Paul's travels, he uses verbs in the first person and plural number. For instance, in the sixteenth chapter, in the course of the narrative, all of a sudden he uses such words; "And after he (that is Paul) had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia." And again, "Therefore loosing from Troas *we* come with straight course to Samothracia," and so on. Afterwards he drops this use of the first person plural and resumes it again. Evidently he drops it when he was not with the party and resumes it when he was.

Now if a forger had intended to make his readers believe that he was an eye-witness of the transaction, we can hardly suppose that he would have contented himself with such a poor expedient, as the use of the first person plural here and there, and that in the latter portion of his book. He would have said so plainly in the preface or at the end of it. That use of the

first person plural then may be taken to indicate in a very natural and *artless way*, the truth that the writer was himself in company with S. Paul on those occasions. But there is another weighty argument, also based on a remarkable internal phenomenon, which goes to prove the same thing. It is most ably treated by Doctor Paley in his work called "Horæ Paulinæ." He there shows, by many *undesigned* coincidences between S. Paul's epistles and the book of "The Acts of the Apostles," that the writer of this latter book must have been intimately acquainted with the history of S. Paul, and that in some of its minute particulars, and therefore he must have been what he professes to have been, namely, a companion of S. Paul in his travels. And there is yet another internal proof for it. There is a description of S. Paul's voyage and shipwreck in the 27th chapter of "The Acts of the Apostles." Now it has been observed by persons who were well skilled in the art of navigation and thoroughly acquainted with the state of the Mediterranean Sea, that no one but an eye-witness could have given such a description of that voyage. If, then, the author of "The Acts of the Apostles" was what he professes to have been, namely, a friend and a companion of S. Paul, then it is proved that the Gospel of S. Luke was written by one who was a friend and a companion of S. Paul, because, as I said, the author of "The Acts of the Apostles" tells us in the beginning of his book that he himself had written that Gospel. This, then, proves the author of the Gospel of S. Luke to have occupied that situation which he says he did occupy, that is, he was acquainted with the eye-witnesses of the history of Christ and that he wrote what he carefully learnt from them. And this is all that is wanted for our purpose; we do not care for his name.

I will mention one very weighty internal proof for the genuineness of the Gospel of S. John. The first Epistle of S. John has been always acknowledged in the Christian Church as the undoubted writing of S. John. S. Irenæus, who was the disciple of S. Polycarp, himself the disciple of S. John, frequently quotes it as S. John's; S. Clement of Alexandria

and Tertullian do the same. Origen's words, quoted before, show that this Epistle was acknowledged by those who doubted the genuineness of the 2nd and 3rd Epistles of S. John, and he continually quotes it as S. John's. Eusebius, the great Ecclesiastical historian, enumerates it among the uncontroverted books of the New Testament Canon. He also tells us that Papias "has made use of testimonies from the 1st Epistle of John." And you remember that Papias was acquainted with intimate friends of the Apostles.

In the Epistle of S. Polycarp, the very disciple of S. John, there occur these words, "Every one who confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is antichrist." And in the 1st Epistle of S. John there are these words, "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist." Seeing that the words of S. Polycarp "contain a plain allusion" to these words of S. John in his first Epistle, "and that Polycarp was the disciple of S. John, it has ever been regarded as an indirect testimony to the genuineness, and so to the authorship, of our Epistle."* But even if you leave out this last testimony from S. Polycarp, still you see that the proofs for the genuineness of the 1st Epistle of S. John are very strong. Now one has only to read this Epistle of S. John and his Gospel and he cannot doubt that both came from one author. "The internal testimony furnished by this Epistle," says Dean Alford, "to its author being the same with the author of the fourth Gospel is, it may well be thought, incontrovertible. To maintain a diversity of authorship would betray the very perverseness and exaggeration of that school of criticism which refuses to believe, be evidence ever so strong."†

Thus then this Epistle affords a proof of very great weight to the genuineness of the Gospel of S. John.

Thus I have tried to give you some proofs for the genuineness of the gospels. But I would advise you to read the whole ninth

* Prolegomena on 1st John.

† Dean Alford, Prolegomena, on 1st John.

chapter, containing eleven sections of the first part of Dr. Paley's book on the Evidences of Christianity, and also Canon Westcott's works on the Canon of the New Testament. There you will find this argument stated more fully and adequately. I have omitted altogether the consideration of the peculiar style of the Greek in which the Gospels are written, although that forms an important part of the argument of the genuineness of the Gospels. I have also said nothing about the most ancient translations of the New Testament. They also afford another proof for the same.

Now you remember what is meant by genuineness. It means that a book was really written by the person whose name it bears. Thus, when we say that the Gospels of S. Mathew, S. Mark, S. Luke, and S. John are genuine, we mean that they were really written by S. Matthew, S. Mark, S. Luke, and S. John.

And you must remember that S. Mathew and S. John were Christ's own disciples, and not only disciples, but of the number of His Apostles, whom He selected out of the number of His disciples, to be His constant companions, and the principal teachers of His religion. And S. Mark lived intimately with the Apostles, and became afterward a constant attendant of S. Peter. S. Luke was an intimate friend and companion of S. Paul, and also was well acquainted with the other Apostles, as appears from the preface of his Gospel.

To prove the genuineness of the Gospels is, as I said before, an important part of the historical argument by which the truth of Christ's miracles is proved, and therefore I dwelt so much on this subject. Now for the sake of brevity I will not attempt to treat the subject of Christ's miracles generally, but will say a few words about Christ's resurrection alone, which was, of course, the crown of all miracles. I beg you then to notice that in the case of all false stories of miracles you will find one of these things: you will find in the first place mostly that those who tell you the stories of those miracles do not profess themselves to be eye-witnesses of those miracles. They generally relate what they themselves have learnt from

hearsay, a दन्तकथा. You hear stories of the miracles of Tukaram, Dnyánadeva, &c. But do you find them stated by any one who professes to have been an eye-witness? Mahipati tells the stories of those miracles in his Bhaktivijaya, but he lived long after the time of those men, and neither does he profess to have been himself an eye-witness of their miracles, nor to have learnt them from eye-witnesses. Again, remember this, that if you find any book containing false stories of miracles, ascribed to the name of a person supposed to have been an eye-witness of those miracles, you will find it difficult to prove that that book is genuine, but will find reasons to suspect that it was falsely ascribed to the name of a contemporary.

Again, if you find a person who tells you a story of a miracle and declares that he himself has seen it, you will find one of two things; either you will find reason to suspect that the person himself was deceived, that is, he thought it to be a miracle when it was not; or you will find that there is not sufficient reason to make you quite sure that the person has not invented the story himself.

But I will tell you one sure mark of a thoroughly trustworthy witness of a miracle which can never be found in a false witness. If a certain number of persons' faith in a religion which they profess depends upon the truth of a miracle, and if the truth of that miracle again depends upon those persons having witnessed that miracle themselves, and if those persons openly declare to the world that they are the eye-witnesses of that miracle, and suffer all sorts of pain and torture and death for bearing such witness and for the sake of that religion which they profess, and from no other motive, then they must be true witnesses of that miracle; and if there is sufficient reason to believe that they were not themselves deceived in their belief that they saw the miracle, then it must be a true miracle.

Now you will find in the accounts of Christ's miracles, and pre-eminently in those of His Resurrection, all the marks of truth. In the first place those who relate them were eye-witnesses, or have learnt them from eye-witnesses.

See how clearly and emphatically S. John declares himself to

be an eye-witness. "That which was from the beginning," he says, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life. * * * That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." Here you see at once a great difference between the accounts of Christ's miracles and those of Tukárám and others.

S. John, who gives an account of Christ's miracles, declares most solemnly that he tells us what he himself heard and saw. Mahipati, who tells the stories of Tukárám's miracles, does not profess to have seen them. If Christ's miracles were not true, S. John, S. Matthew, and the other Apostles must have been most deliberate liars. Tukárám's and Dnyánadeva's miracles may have been false, and yet Mahipati need not be supposed to have been a liar at all. Now although you do not admit that Christianity is a revelation of God, yet I think you believe that it surpasses all religions in its excellency, and that its teaching has a wonderful power of renovating and sanctifying the hearts of those who yield themselves unreservedly to its influence. Now do you think it credible that the very first teachers and promulgators of such a holy religion, John, James, Peter, Matthew, Paul, and others, should have been most deliberate liars and deliberate and cool inventors of false stories?

But I will now set before you some other considerations which will make it certain that the testimony of the Apostles to Christ's miracles is true. You must remember, in the first place, that the Apostles were themselves converts to a new religion. Now the very fact that a man leaves one religion and embraces another is a proof that he believes the new religion to be true, and that thereby he will get benefit to his soul. It also proves that the man has a religious disposition, and is in earnest unless we have reason to suspect that he had some sinister motives in embracing that new religion. But no one can suspect that the Apostles became followers of Christ from sinister motives. It is true that they

* 1st Epistle of S. John i. 1—3.

had, at first, low views of Christ's kingdom which they believed that He came to establish, still they must have been sincere in their faith, for they must have really believed that He was that Christ whom the Prophets had foretold, for then only could they have expected that He would establish His kingdom upon this earth as foretold by the Prophets. But whatever low views they may have entertained about His kingdom at first, those must have vanished away when they saw Him crucified like a malefactor before their own eyes. Thenceforth their motives in adhering to Him could have been no other than those of the highest kind that any man ever had for adhering to a religion.

If, then, the Apostles were converts to Christianity, they must have believed that Christianity was true. There are however religions the embracing of which may not cost a man much. But you know what it costs to become a Christian even now; it cost far more in those days than it does now. If therefore one embraces a religion at such a cost, it is certain that his belief in that religion is genuine.

But you must notice further that not only must it have cost the Apostles much to have become Christians, but they also went about preaching it to others, and in doing so they passed their whole lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings. Jesus Christ had told them before that "they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for My Name's sake." "They shall lay hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to synagogues, and into prison, being brought before kings and rulers for My Name's sake, and ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends." "The time cometh, that he that killeth you will think that he doeth God service." So Jesus Christ had told them before, and so it came to pass. They were persecuted, they were imprisoned, they were scourged, they were put to death, for His Name's sake and for preaching His religion.

S. Paul, speaking about himself and other Apostles, says, "I think that God hath set forth us, the Apostles, last, as it were appointed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the

world, and to angels, and to men;—even unto this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffetted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour, working with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

"We are troubled on every side," he says in another Epistle, "yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."

And remember they suffered all this from no other motive than that of pure love to Christ and charity to men. Most certainly, then, the Apostles must have been good men; most certainly they must have believed in Christ, they must have believed in Christianity.

But now there is another thing to be considered, and it is, that if the Apostles had not really believed that Christ rose from the dead, they could never have believed that Christianity was true, or Jesus was the Christ whom their Prophets had foretold. For in the view of the Apostles Christ's resurrection was the most essential doctrine of Christianity and the one great proof that Jesus was the Saviour of the world, and that Christianity was from God.

Hear what S. Paul says, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ." Again, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most miserable." And why so? Because according to the Apostle's notions, if Christ did not rise from the dead, then they had no hope whatever in the future. And in this life they had given up all that is calculated to make one happy, and exposed themselves to persecutions, imprisonments, and deaths. Who then

could be considered more miserable and more pitiable than they? You see, then, that in the view of the Apostles everything hung upon the resurrection of Christ. If Christ did not rise, then Christianity was a lie, Jesus no Saviour but a pretender, their faith was in vain, they received no remission of their sins, there was no hope for them in future, their death was an annihilation.

Then consider again that there was no other proof for Christ's resurrection than the Apostles seeing Him after He rose from the dead. If they had not seen Him risen they could not believe Him to have been risen; and if they did not believe him to be risen, they could not believe in Him, or in Christianity. Christianity would have been a simple lie in their view, as I have already shown.

Think now, gentlemen, very seriously, I beseech you, and tell me, would they have clung all their life long to a religion which they believed in their hearts to be false? And would they have passed their lives in labours, dangers, and sufferings, voluntarily undergone in attestation of a fact which they knew to be untrue, and for the sake of a religion which they believed to be a lie? Why, if you will believe this you will make the first teachers and promulgators of the holiest and wisest and world-renovating religion, I will not say deliberate liars, but the veriest maniacs. There have been what are called pious frauds we know. But what is a pious fraud? When a man really believes in a religion and invents stories of miracles to set forth the glories of the god, or of the founder and teacher of the religion, then it is called a pious fraud. A pious fraud necessarily includes a real belief in a religion.

But that a person, or rather many persons, without believing in a religion, but rather knowing it to be false, should cling themselves to it all their life long, and should expose themselves to labours, dangers, sufferings, persecutions, scourgings, imprisonments, and deaths for the sake of that religion, and in attestation of a miracle which alone could make that religion true, but which the relaters of it themselves know to be false, this is impossible.

There remains only one question;—were the Apostles themselves deceived with regard to the miracle of Christ's resurrection? But this supposition is equally impossible. For Christ, after His resurrection, appeared, not once only but several times, to His Apostles; not to one, or two, or three only, but to many together, and that also many times. Hear what S. Paul says. And whoever knows the history of S. Paul cannot entertain any doubt about his sincerity and honesty. He was first a great opponent of Christianity, and persecuted Christians, and that from a religious motive, because he thought that it was a very wicked heresy and ought to be extirpated. Well, he himself was caught into the net of Christ, and then for His Name's sake, he spent the remainder of his life in labours and sufferings. From his Epistles you will know that he was neither a fanatic nor an enthusiast in the bad sense of the word, but was a most reasonable and sober-minded person. In his first Epistle to the Corinthians S. Paul says that Christ after His resurrection "was seen of Cephas, (that is S. Peter,) then of the twelve. After that he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles." And we read in the Gospels that He was not only seen by the Apostles after His resurrection, but He conversed with them, they ate and drank with Him, and, as they tell us, they touched and handled Him. This is especially what S. John refers to when he says, "which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled."* Add to this that the Apostles themselves were not inclined to believe in His resurrection, but were most incredulous and slow to believe, and were only brought to believe by irresistible proofs. One of them even said that "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." These facts remove all possibility of

* 1st Epistle of S. John i. 1.

illusion in the matter. And that being removed, the truth of the miracle of Christ's resurrection is proved.

But before concluding this Lecture, it is necessary to say a few words in answer to two objections. Men have begun to say in these days that miracles are in themselves incredible. Why, I ask, is it difficult for Almighty God to work a miracle? And if it should please Him to give us a revelation, of which all of us certainly stood in great need, is it not most reasonable to suppose that He should give some credentials to the messengers of His revelation? Is it not on the contrary most unreasonable to suppose that God Almighty should send to us a messenger bearing His message to us, and the messenger should bring no credentials?

And what could be a more fitting credential from Almighty God than the manifestation of His Divine power in working miracles, and of His Divine knowledge in prophecies, both of which are beyond the power of man? And you see that Christianity, which claims to be a message from God, claims also to possess exactly these two things, miracles and prophecies, as its external credentials.

And observe this, I beseech you, that since Christianity, to say the least, appears most like a religion which should be a revelation of God, Christian miracles become the more credible, as we naturally expect that divine revelation should be accompanied by some manifestation of Divine power.

Some persons think that miracles being an alteration of the law of nature, a belief in a miracle would make God a changeable Being. Why, I ask, would a belief in miracles make God changeable any more than the changes of days, nights, and seasons do? You will answer that the laws which bring about the changes of days, &c., were fixed by God once for all from all eternity. I answer, so were the miracles. Do you suppose we believe that up to a certain time God thought nothing at all about the miracles which He was going to work, and suddenly at that time He changed His mind and began to alter the laws of nature? It is not so. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning," say the Christian Scriptures.

Simultaneously with His ordinary laws He also fixed that at a particular time for the inestimable benefit of His intelligent creature, man, He would give to him His revelation and manifest His Supernatural Power in attestation of that revelation. Those who say that a belief in a miracle makes God changeable, should consider what they would be obliged to think of prayer. Do we not pray to God at a particular time to give us certain graces, and do we not believe that He will grant us those graces? But does this our belief necessarily make God changeable?

The second objection is this. When we refer to the evidence of miracles in support of the claim of Christianity to be a divine revelation, some persons are fond of bringing an objection that since the Bible says that even Satan can endow his agents with the power of working miracles, as it is said of antichrist that he will show "signs and lying wonders,"* miracles cannot be undoubted credentials of a messenger from God.

Now in answering this objection I wish to say, first, that most of those persons who bring this objection do so as an excuse for not entering deeply into the examination of the historical evidence for the truth of Christ's miracles, and they, not giving impartial and serious attention to that evidence, are not convinced of the truth of those miracles and do not believe them to have been really wrought. But until this question has been examined and until it has been assented to that Christ and His Apostles did really work miracles, of what use is it to consider the objection that since Satan also is said in the Bible to be able to give the power of working miracles to his agents, the miracles of Christ and His Apostles cannot be sure marks of their being sent by God? My advice, therefore, to such objectors is not to entangle themselves in such useless objections, but rather to examine the question whether there are satisfactory evidences to prove that Christ did work those miracles which the Gospels relate. For when they shall be convinced that Jesus Christ really did perform those mighty miracles, they

* 2 Thessalonians, ii. 10.

will find sufficient reasons to believe that they were wrought, not by the power of Satan, but by the power of God. For though there may be, in the invisible world, beings endowed with power of doing some extraordinary things—things which are beyond the power of men to do—still surely we must believe that there is a limit to their power. And I think that our instinct naturally leads us to believe that such mighty miracles as Jesus Christ and His Apostles wrought could only be wrought by the power of God. Such would be our natural and instinctive conclusion when we are not driven to form other conclusions through some prejudice, as the Jews of Christ's time were through their bias to their fond theories of the Messiah with which the character of Christ did not seem to them to correspond. Nay, since it cannot be proved either from Scripture or from other *authentic* history that such mighty works have ever been wrought by any other power than that of God, and seeing that men are naturally apt to ascribe such power to God, and there is no reason to ascribe it to any other being than God, and since Jesus Christ and His Apostles, in working those mighty works, solemnly declared that they were working by the power of God, and in attestation of the message which they brought to us as the message of God, our instinct leads us to conclude that Almighty God would never allow any other being to endow his agents with power to work such mighty works in His Name and to deceive mankind.

And this moreover we cannot pass unnoticed, that those who generally bring this objection do not build it on their own reasoning. They do not themselves believe that Satan can work miracles; they do not believe that there is such a being as Satan, but they say that the Bible says so, and upon the saying of the Bible they build their objection. They ought, therefore, to take into their consideration what the Bible says to remove that objection. Now the Bible tells us plainly that Satan can only deceive those by his miracles who are not earnest seekers of God and His truth. S. Paul, in his 2nd Epistle to the Thessalonians (ii. 10), speaking of antichrist, says, "whose coming is after the working of Satan with all

power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, *because they received not the love of truth* that they might be saved." Hence it is clear, as indeed our very instinct leads us to believe, that God Almighty will either not allow Satan to work miracles in order to deceive *those who are seekers of* God and His truth, or He will provide means whereby they may be able to distinguish his work from God's work and be preserved from being deceived by it. For instance, we read in Holy Scripture, with regard to the miracles which the magicians of Egypt wrought, that though God Almighty did allow Satan, for the greater manifestation of His own power, to work some miracles, yet it soon became evident that the power of Satan could not oppose the power of God. For the magicians could only go on to a certain extent doing their wonders, and then had to acknowledge openly that their own power failed before the power of God, manifested through His true messenger Moses, and were compelled to confess concerning it that "this is the finger of God," and so it became evident both to the people of God the Israelites, as well to those who opposed God, namely, Pharaoh and the Egyptians, that the power of God was superior to all.

But the decisive answer to such an objection is this. Let us consider the first great thing which miracles do. When a teacher claiming to be sent by God works miracles as Jesus Christ did, the first thing which his miracles do is to remove all doubts from our minds whether the teacher may not be putting forth the speculations of his own mind in the name of a message from God. And this is a very great thing. For we see that the world is full of religions and pretended revelations, which by examination turn out to be simply the inventions of men's own minds. But when a teacher really sent by God comes to us and shows us works wrought by a supernatural power as credentials of his divine mission, we are made quite certain that the message which he brings comes from a source which is above man, for it is certain that man cannot, by his own power, work miracles, and so all doubts are removed as

to whether what he teaches may not be merely an invention of his own mind. And this is a very great thing. For it differs his message at once from all the innumerable systems of men which they have been putting forth as messages from heaven.

But you say that there is still this doubt left, whether the superhuman power which this teacher possesses is of God or of some other being, and therefore whether also the message which he brings is from God or from that other being. But this question can very easily be settled. If that being be other than God by whose power the teacher is working the miracle, it must be antagonistic to God, it must be an adversary of God, and the same we call Satan, for Satan means an adversary. But would Satan, the adversary of God, whose desire must ever be to oppose God, deliver such a religion as Christianity is, whose first and *principal* command is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"?* Would Satan, whose whole purpose is to dishonour God and to overthrow His kingdom, and to set up his own wicked kingdom, teach us to pray to God, "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven"? Would Satan teach us, "Love thy neighbour as thyself," and not rather hate thy neighbour and kill him? Would Satan ever teach, "Blessed are the pure in heart; blessed are the merciful; blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness;" "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from all appearance of evil;" "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you"?

To be short, if, on the one hand, you will take into consideration the mighty works which Jesus Christ did, and, on the

* For "This is the first and great commandment," says Jesus Christ. And He adds, "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments," says He, "hang all the law and the prophets."—S. Matt. xxii. 38—40.

other hand, consider what sort of a religion Christianity is, and what sort of a person Jesus Christ was, the natural result will be that you will be quite certain that He really came from God and His message is the message of God. But he who will not be convinced of this by the force of those two considerations may as well remain in doubt for ever whether He who made this world was God. Doubts of this kind are of an extravagant and unnatural kind. There is room for admitting such doubts in everything which we believe either of God or man. You must remember that the grounds which our Maker has seen fit to furnish us with for our conduct in this life, or towards God, (which is religion) are not scientific but moral, and therefore admit much room for extravagant and unnatural doubts. And herein consists the state of our probation. For those who are truth-loving, teachable, and humble, are instinctively satisfied by those grounds with regard to all things which it is necessary for us to be convinced of. But if they are insincere, proud, and prejudiced, they lose that healthy instinct and intuition, and become a prey to all sorts of unnatural and extravagant doubts.

Now, dear Sirs, let me address you a few words of exhortation. God Almighty has graciously given us his revelation. We most certainly needed it, for we were all groping in darkness, and should have gone on for ever groping in it, if He had not sent to us His revelation, that is, Christianity, and in order to certify us that it is really the voice of God and not a theory of man, in order that we may have the certainty that we have got God's truth and not an imagination of man, God Almighty has certainly set His seal to the message which He has sent to us by those supernatural works which Jesus Christ wrought, and which He claimed as proofs of His Divine mission. Will you reject this sure and certain word of God, and rely upon Theism which, though mostly derived from Christianity, yet has no other foundation for *you* (since you reject Christianity) than the reason, the notions, the imaginations, and the tastes of each individual? What reliance can be placed upon such a thing? What stability has it? How long will it last? Whether you believe or no the truth of what I

have so fully shown you in my first discourse, that this Theism which you now profess you owe entirely to Christianity, it is nevertheless unquestionably so. But I must tell you that as man can never get right notions of religious truths without the light of revelation, so after he has acquired those notions by coming in contact with revelation, if he will not accept that revelation itself and make it his guide, but will rely still upon his own poor reason, depend upon it, that by degrees he will lose those notions, and wander away again into all sorts of errors. If human reason has always led men into errors, it is clear that if men, after coming within the light of revelation, will still rely upon reason and not hold fast to that revelation, that reason will lead them into errors again. If when a vessel has received heat from the fire which was put into it a man were to suppose there was no need of fire, the heat is an inherent property of the vessel itself, and so were to throw away the fire, the heat will still remain in the vessel for a time, but it will not remain long. It will soon be altogether extinguished and the vessel will become as cold as ever again.

O that you would think well and seriously on this subject, and recognize the voice of God which is calling you, and obey it, and make yourselves and your children and your country partakers in the blessings which Christianity alone imparts. God said to Abraham thousands of years ago, that "In thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed." Jesus Christ is that "Seed" of Abraham, and all those who believe in Him are blessed.

BOMBAY: PRINTED AT THE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S PRESS, BYCULLA.

00068072

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018